

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

AUGUST 16, 1941

WHAT'S WHAT

THE QUINTS have spent all of their seven years behind closely guarded fences. They may be visited, but they themselves have never, except once, been allowed out of their enclosure, not even to enter their father's house, a hundred steps down the road from their Nursery. The Editor spent a day at Corbeil, and now reports his finding of fact. His story will come as a revelation, in many details, to most Americans. His recommendation is sensible and urgent: unite these seven-year old girls to their family, and thus save them from the danger of becoming neurotic and psychopathic. . . . THE FUNNIES have ceased to be humorous and gay. They have been turned into grim, blood-curdling pictures of violence and cruelty. Harold C. Gardiner, Associate Editor, has made a study of the superman, spy and saboteur series, and indicts them as corruptors of the minds and imaginations of our children. . . . THE CHAPLAINS are the most powerful influence for good in the Army and Navy. J. Gerard Mears, Associate Editor, has visited some of the camps and has studied the reports and letters received from the padres all over the country. The more one learns from and about the Catholic Chaplains, the higher is one's estimation of these young priests who are battling to save the souls of our young soldier boys. . . . THE FORUM is a good old American custom, currently discussed by J. George Frederick, President of the Business Bourse, "publishers of unusual books," and author of books on personality. . . . THE GALLERY of Living Catholic Authors is an enthusiasm of Catherine M. Neale, formerly of the staff of the *Commonweal*.

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COMMENT

THESE months are marked by confusion and fear. Every person to whom one talks seriously is uncertain and apprehensive about the present, and is worried about the future. The shocks and surprises arising out of the war abroad and out of the preparations for war by the United States have been too many and too sudden. The limitations on gasoline, the curb on silk are but small indications of greater sacrifices to come. The rapid increase in prices of food essentials, the lowering of the tax base and the plan for joint tax returns of married persons, the syphoning of excess income and the certainty of inflation are but symptoms of a changed economy that will take away security in living. The more passionate expression of views about this country entering or not entering the war are creating enmities and suspicions between old friends, and are making everyone more nervous about the possibilities. The secrecy covering the moves of the President and his representative, Mr. Hopkins, and other important personages who are making historic decisions, is cause for distressing speculation. The disruption in the life of the young people in the twenties, is reflected in the thinking of the elders. The boys are away in camps, and many of them are there reluctantly, especially since they may be away indefinitely. The girls now reaching maturity are deprived of normal companionship, since the eligible lads are in the army. Everywhere, during this summer, on all occasions, people have been looking on events with grim misgivings and with trepidation. Courage, then, is needed by our American people. Determination to rule their lives is essential. But how may clarity of thought and security in action be brought out of the present confusion and fearfulness? Only by the united and steady impact of sound public opinion on our legislators and executives.

SOME readers will respond: "Why be so gloomy? Snap out of it, and look on the brighter side. There's plenty of laughter and gaiety about, prosperity is a'coming, the American people have the strength to pull out of the doldrums, no matter how black they appear. Put your faith in the President and the brainy men he has gathered around him. They will lead us out of the desert and into the promised land. All we need have is faith and hope. Don't fret and worry, and don't spread the doctrine of gloom. You just wait and see. Things are not so bad. Yes, things are a bit mixed up now, but they will straighten themselves out nicely. Hitler's on the down grade, Russia is putting up a wonderful fight, England is getting stronger and stronger, and America is going to come out on top." Perhaps a little wishful thinking like this may help dissolve the humidities of the summer.

MUCH has been said to the effect that Russia's entry into the European war has simplified the issue as far as our keeping out of the war is concerned. Now, it is said, there are two openly pagan and anti-Christian governments in conflict, so the matter is reduced to a fight between thieves in which no issue of justice can possibly be concerned. As far as the character of the participants is concerned, this is a fair statement of the case. But it confuses the issue itself. To the contrary of what is generally assumed, by Russia's entry into the war the element of justice instead of being eliminated is introduced and intensified. Whatever uncertainty there may be as to which party was the actual aggressor in the combat between the Western nations and Germany, there appears to be little doubt as to the definite aggression against a technically peaceful nation in the case of Germany's attack upon the USSR. The mere fact that the USSR is a non-Christian, is an anti-Christian government does not destroy the objective element of aggression and consequent injustice. Did the character of the government that is attacked cancel out all injustice on the part of those who attack it, a ready case might be made out that the United States should itself declare war upon Russia, or upon any other non-Christian regime.

THE circumstance, therefore, that a case can be made out for the justice of Russia's defense against Germany warns us again as to the folly of committing our decision to remain out of the European war to the abstract issue of the rights and wrongs of the conflict itself. Russia's defense against Hitler may be perfectly justified from the standpoint of international ethics, but at the same time an alliance with the Soviets, a participation in their defense, would have the practical consequence of involving the United States in the turbid stream of Russia's pestiferous international policy. The very justice of Russia's cause is our danger. War today is total war; it is social war; it is propaganda war: and to share in any war is to share in any and every phase of it. Not the issues of the European cause, but the interests of the United States, the need to preserve ourselves and our liberties against corroding and revolutionary influences that such participation would let loose: these are the reasons why we insist America must at all costs keep from taking part in the war abroad.

TENDENCIES aiding the war spirit were unveiled. . . . Congressman Celler introduced a bill into the House of Representatives in Washington to repeal the neutrality act in order to "clear the way for our ships under the American flag to carry

supplies to Great Britain—unafraid.” . . . Wendell L. Willkie stated he would refuse an invitation to debate with Norman Thomas the Administration’s foreign policy at an anti-war rally in Elwood, Ind., where Mr. Willkie accepted the Republican Presidential nomination. The debate was suggested by Elwood’s mayor to demonstrate the opposition of the “home of Wendell Willkie” toward war and the Washington foreign policy. Norman Thomas said he had received an invitation and accepted it. . . . A group of Free French living in this country announced they would act as an advisory council to the Fight for Freedom, Inc., an organization working for United States intervention. The group includes Henry Bernstein, playwright; Charles Boyer, film actor; Eve Curie, scientist; André Geraud, journalist, whose pen name is Pertinax; and Jacques Maritain, now lecturing at Princeton and Columbia Universities. . . . Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain broadcast to the women of the United States. . . . Harry L. Hopkins, Lease-Lend Administrator, returned from Moscow to London “impressed” by the optimism of Josef Stalin. . . . Two Bolshevik Generals arrived in the United States to consult with the Administration concerning Washington’s aid to Moscow. . . . Dr. Wm. M. Agar, made public through Fight For Freedom, Inc., a telegram dispatched to the Archbishop Francis J. Beckman of Dubuque, asking the prelate to retract statements made in his anti-war radio address. . . . Fight For Freedom, Inc., distributed thousands of printed post-cards to be sent by citizens to Congress. The cards urged retention of the draftees. . . . Senator Danaher charged that a vice chairman of the Committee to Defend America had written to New England editors, asking them to “arouse indignation” against Senator Wheeler. . . . Associate Justice Stanley F. Reed of the Supreme Court, supported the policy toward war.

THE no-war forces were active. . . . Senator Wheeler declared that the motion-picture industry has been carrying on the most gigantic campaign of propaganda ever known in the history of the United States. Stating he was reading from a letter sent by a Hollywood executive to movie personnel, he said the communication urged the studio employees to turn out for a Willkie meeting “as strongly as the bums and the other subversive elements turned out for Mr. Lindbergh.” . . . Representative Day charged that aid to the Russian dictatorship is a “usurpation,” that authority under the Lend-Lease Act was granted by Congress solely to aid democracies. . . . In an *Editor & Publisher* poll, 250 newspapers favored intervention, 615 were opposed. . . . Speaking at an America First Committee meeting in St. Louis, Senator Nye asserted the motion-picture companies “have been operating as war propaganda machines almost as if they were directed from a single central bureau.” . . . The Pennsylvania State Board of Censors banned two Russian motion picture films, characterizing them as propaganda for Communism. . . . The Mayor of Meridian, Miss., called on the town people to pause at

noon each day and pray for peace. The city whistles will give a daily reminder. . . . Senator Walsh declared the Selective Service Act was adopted under “false pretenses,” and that President Roosevelt’s foreign policy has operated “to lead us day by day into the war.” . . . The New York Chapter of the America First Committee protested to the State Department what it characterized as American interference in the Japanese-French Indo-China dispute. The telegram argued: “If we claim the right to intervene to prevent Japanese acquisition of bases in Indo-China, Japan has an equal right to intervene to prevent our acquisition of bases in Brazil. Your proposition is obviously one of international anarchy.” It charged that the Administration was trying to create the impression that the United States is being attacked. . . . Fifteen Republican leaders, including Alfred M. Landon and Herbert C. Hoover, joined in an appeal to Congress “to put a stop to the step by step projection of the United States into undeclared war” . . . Referring to the intimation that there is a national peril, Senator Vandenberg maintained that the peril is being generated by “war-making speeches” of Cabinet members who have “trigger fingers that itch for a shooting war”. . . . Senator Brooks charged the peril we are in today “is because of the uncertainty as to what move the Administration may make next to shove us closer to shooting participation in war.”

“I AM, my dear Mr. Welles, Very sincerely yours, Constantine A. Oumansky.” Thus closes the letter of the Soviet Ambassador to the Acting Secretary of State concerning the accord between our “freedom-loving nations” on economic assistance to the Soviet Union. We all know that formal epistolary perorations are not to be taken too seriously. Did not Doctor Johnson, after laying out in lavender the distinguished Lord Chesterfield, in a masterpiece of lofty disdain, sign himself: “Your Lordship’s most humble, most obedient servant”? However, Mr. Oumansky’s “very sincerely” arouses strange emotions. Sincerity is a virtue which is very rare in current international diplomacy. Bedfellows of yesterday are at each other’s throats today. Not long ago Russia was the bosom friend of those whom we consider our undeclared enemies. Even now the emissaries of Soviet Russia are termites in the foundation of our country, even though they are coming out of their destructive tunnels and pretending to be busy and friendly ants. Undoubtedly sincere were the complimentary epithets hurled at this country by Mr. Oumansky and other Soviet spokesmen up to now, but this present sweet accord, concomitant with the United States pledge for full economic and material help to Russia, is a little too sudden and expedient to impress us with the great and heartfelt sincerity of the Reds. There was too much Christian blood spilled in Russia to be suddenly wiped away by Mr. Oumansky’s unctious “sincerity,” and the inclusion of the Soviet Union among “freedom-loving nations” is ludicrous.

TRAFFIC in contraceptive instruments is vigorously assailed by the veteran Dominican writer and preacher, Father Vincent McNabb, of London. Father McNabb addressed an open letter on the subject to Prime Minister Winston Churchill; calling the havoc wrought by race suicide among the "under thirties" the greatest national weakness in these days of the nation's self-defense. Father McNabb declared he had been told, on good authority, that Catholics in the Royal Air Force are eighteen per cent of the total, though Catholics number but five per cent of the general population of Great Britain.

ACCORDING to *Shlach* ("The Way"), Ukrainian Catholic weekly, the heroic Archbishop Sheptitsky, Catholic Metropolitan of Lwów (Lviv, Lemberg), is still alive in that city where he resides in the archiepiscopal palace of St. George. Rumors were current that he had succumbed to the distress consequent upon the Russian invasion. Authority for the favorable statement is found in reports that have come from Galicia to Switzerland.

IN an open letter to *Time* magazine, the Most Rev. Francis J. K. Beckman, Archbishop of Dubuque, replied vigorously to the accusation in the current issue of that publication that he had shown himself "an anti-Semite." "Let it be known now," said the Archbishop, "that I am not and never have been an anti-Semite and that Christ's words, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' have a thoroughly cosmopolitan meaning for me. Catholic, Christian and Jew can and ought to cooperate in preserving this nation at peace."

CURT is the notice, apparently emanating from Nazi censors, which is attached to the last issue received of *Stimmen der Zeit*, German Jesuit monthly founded seventy-one years ago, to the effect that war restrictions necessitate stopping the publication of the magazine. According to N.C.W.C. news service, similar notices are inserted in *Hochland*, German Catholic monthly now in its thirty-eighth year, and *Helianth*, an ascetic bi-monthly periodical published in Breslau. This apparently indicates systematic suppression of the few remaining Catholic publications of Germany. The *Stimmen* has long confined itself to strictly non-political articles; but it has chronicled the progress of the Church throughout the world and interested itself particularly in the reunion of Christendom and the religious philosophy of the modern mind.

ALL confessional associations, the character of which bears any political, social or economic connotation, are to be abolished in Belgium, according to an article by Raymond de Becker, entitled *Warning to the Clergy*, in the Brussels newspaper *Soir*, quoted by the N.C.W.C. "The followers of political Catholicism," says the article, "will be fought to the full, even if their representatives are found among the high clergy. By political Catholicism we understand any attempt of the Church to oppose the political ends of the state or to disturb national

unity. . . . As for education, the New Order will not allow the existence within the nation of cells of spiritual separatism, nor any resistance to the National Socialist revolution in the form of confessional schools where confessional youth organizations refuse to accept the discipline asked from everyone."

SPIRITUAL separatism is an extremely specious plea. It is used effectively by the Nazis, as in the instance just quoted. It is used as an argument for Socialist education in Mexico. Habitually schools in this country that include religious teaching in their curriculum are attacked upon this ground. But like most specious arguments it readily proves to be a boomerang. Groups which registered opposition to the released-time plan (for religious instruction periods for public-school children) urge its abolition on the ground of spiritual separatism. Some of these groups are extremely vocal and active. Some of the principal Jewish groups are included in their number. This is short-sighted policy. Enforced spiritual conformity is the death not only of religious, but also of political liberty. No group, minority or majority, can enforce such conformity upon parents without being caught eventually in their own trap.

MOST historic site in Ontario and first place of pilgrimage in North America—named as such by Pope Urban VIII in 1644—is Fort Ste. Marie, where six of the eight Canadian martyrs lived at one time. It was the first great center of civilization in the present Province of Ontario. This summer the Royal Ontario Museum of Archeology, at the invitation of the Rev. Thomas Lally, S.J., is engaged in excavating the fort. Its outlines have already been determined. Indian material and French articles are being recovered.

NEW Bishop designated for the See of Amarillo, to succeed the Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, is the Most Rev. Laurence J. FitzSimon, chancellor of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Bishop FitzSimon served in the Navy during the World War and was attached to the mine-laying force in the North Sea.

PACIFISTS were outvoted, 136 to 16, at the recent English Methodist Conference at Leeds, which likewise accepted and endorsed the five points of the Statement on the Foundation of Peace set forth by the leaders of the Anglican, Catholic and Free Churches in Great Britain. These are the well known points outlined by Pope Pius XII. The Methodists add a sixth: "the sacred and inviolable right of every man and woman to liberty of conscience and worship."

STEVENSVILLE, Montana, site of Saint Mary's Mission to the Indians, will be the scene of one of the three Solemn Pontifical Masses which will mark August 24, 25 and 26, the Centenary of Catholicism in Montana. The mission was founded by Father DeSmet, among the Flathead Indians in 1841, and is located thirty miles south of Missoula.

THE QUINTS ARE NOW SEVEN AND THEY LONG TO GO HOME

FRANCIS TALBOT

CORBEIL is a French-Canadian village in the North Bay district of Ontario. It is the birthplace of the Dionne Quintuplets. Callander is an adjoining village, on the shore of Lake Nipissing. It has a railroad station and a telegraph office. From Callander, on May 28, 1934, the incredible news of the birth of five babies was flashed to an unbelieving world.

Corbeil and Callander are not, as currently believed, outposts on the fringe of civilization. This portion of Ontario is not wild and rugged, woody and dank. The countryside has a placid, comfortable atmosphere. It is laid out in farmlands and pasture grounds, with many roads cutting across the rolling landscape. It is the same sort of country that you drive through in your own county and State. The area is the same now as it was seven years ago, except that a broad highway replaces the dirt road that used to run in front of the house of Mr. Oliva Dionne.

It was my privilege to spend a day in Corbeil and Callander, to talk with all those who are part of the fact history of the Dionne Quintuplets. At the end of the day, I confessed to myself that I had been grossly misinformed about the Quints and their family. And I suspect that, strange as this may seem, the American people have never heard the full truth about the Quints and the Dionnes.

The five seven-year olds, Yvonne, Annette, Cecile, Emilie and Marie, are loved by all the world. They soften the emotions of the harshest, they warm the most frigid, they are pets to the most cynical and inhuman people. They are always good news. Too often, however, they are regarded as miraculous little flowers growing out of a nasty swamp. Again, they are looked on as babies snatched from a dark and even sinister environment. The simple truth is that they are exactly like their seven brothers and sisters. They just happened to be born five at a time.

The most important house in Callander is that of Dr. Allan Roy Dafoe, situated a few hundred yards up the road from the station. All who know and love the Quints, love and know Dr. Dafoe. Despite his fame and his achievements, his modest home is still his unobtrusively modest home. His small waiting room and his cluttered office are those of the familiar country doctor.

He greeted us most cordially. His eyes are those wise, shrewd eyes that have been diagnosing the ailments of his country folk for thirty years. In

his home, he meets one with that same jolly, surprised smile that looks out from the motion pictures. Though he is no longer a member of the Board of Guardians, he is still the head physician of the Dafoe Nursery, and will always be the foster-daddy of the Quints. Through his fine courtesy, the guarded doors of the Nursery were opened to us.

The next visit was to the newly-appointed parish priest of Corbeil, Rev. Wilfrid Honoré LaFrance. For ten years, he was engaged in youth work, and for three years was the director of youth activities in the diocese of Pembroke. Father LaFrance is a blue-eyed, square-jawed, pleasant looking young priest, of the manly, athletic type. He is highly intelligent and affable. His parishioners regard him with respect and affection, and the Quints idolize him. Through his kindness, we were introduced to the Dionnes.

Just a few steps off the main road that connects Callander and Corbeil is the two-story house, the big red barn and the farm yard of Oliva Dionne. The house was built by the grandfather of the Quints in 1903, and their father was born in it a year later. From the road, it looks comfortable and prosperous, quite comparable to the home of Dr. Dafoe, quite as respectable as any house you will find in the neighborhood. I was surprised to learn that this was the house in which the Quints were born, for I had really expected to see a shack or a tumble-down hut in the forests.

Despite the sign stating that no visitors were allowed, we climbed the steps to the porch. Mrs. Dionne opened to our ring. She smiled shyly, ushered us into the living room, and greeted us as would a lady. Elzire Legros was, undoubtedly, an attractive girl when she married Oliva Dionne in 1925, at the age of sixteen. She is now a sweet-faced, motherly sort of person. She does not speak English, and has no need to learn it. She is content with her French, and content with her home and her neighbors. She is rightly irritated at the ill-mannered tourists who snoop about her fence and destroy her privacy. She has been outrageously vilified by reporters and newspapers.

The living room of the Dionne home is of the same pattern as that of the better-class farmers of Ontario and Quebec. The furniture is plain and serviceable now, as it was seven years ago. The room was neat and well cleaned, not because of our visit but because Mrs. Dionne is, and always has been, a good housewife.

Ernest, a lad of fourteen, who attends boarding school in Ottawa, and Rose and Thérèse, thirteen and twelve respectively, who are being schooled by the Grey Nuns at Aylmer, Quebec, were poised and courteous in their greetings. Our entrance waked Victor, aged three, who was taking his afternoon nap on the sofa. He is the picture of health.

The door from the kitchen opened. A neatly dressed gentleman entered. He seemed young and alert, as he walked toward us. He welcomed us in fluent English, with scarcely a trace of an accent. He was Mr. Dionne, the thirty-seven-year old father of the Quintuplets and the seven other Dionnes. Most Americans, myself included, pictured him as a heavy-set clod-hopper, a somewhat brutish and ignorant backwood farmer. Whereas here was a streamlined sort of business man, a fit applicant for a white-collar job. Seven years ago, when the Quints were born, he was the owner of a 300-acre farm, the farm that had belonged to his father. He was prosperous and progressive.

We sat about the table and talked. Mr. Dionne has convictions, and expressed them clearly and forcibly. His views derive, in general, from that hard-headed, common-sense spiritual outlook characteristic of the substantial French-Canadian. He believes that the family is a unit; that the father is the head of the family; and has first rights over all his children. He admits that, in extraordinary cases, the State should cooperate, even taking extraordinary means. He spoke as any father would, any father of intelligence and self-confidence.

From the porch of his house, a few hundred steps down the road, on the Dionne acres, is the Dafoe Nursery. At ten every morning, and three every afternoon, the Quintuplets have their supervised exercise in a walled garden, and are on exhibition. For half an hour they are exposed to public gaze, but, although they are seven, they are not supposed to know that the public is viewing them. Tourists and sight-seers are permitted to walk along a corridor and look out at the Quints through a dark-screened window. On this particular afternoon in July, some four hundred visitors waited in a long line for their turn to get a few minutes' look at the children. The number of visitors was about normal; sometimes the line consists of thousands.

Looking through the screen, we watched five little girls riding bicycles, bunched one after the other, around and around the oval path. They were singing in unison, vivaciously, as they peddled around and around. They might pause for a moment to speak to their white-clad nurse, or to peer up at the screened windows, or to toss a word to a little blond girl who went up and down in a swing. The little blond was Pauline, less than a year older than the Quints. She is a stunningly beautiful child, bright and healthy-looking.

The view of the children through the screen is not altogether fair to them. One gathers the impression that they are automatons, that they are doing a theatrical act, that they may possibly be a bit moronic. Pauline, in the swing, pointed a contrast. She seemed to be natural, normal, at her

ease. The other five girls appeared to be performing an exhibition ride-and-song.

After the curiosity of the public had been satisfied, for that afternoon, Mr. Dionne, Father LaFrance, Father Marion Casey of St. Paul, Minn., and I were admitted through the gate of the high iron fence and into the Nursery. Judge J. A. Valin, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, bade us welcome. He is very fond of Americans.

The Nursery is a house of fives: five dresses hanging on the line; five chairs and five tables; five baby organs; five beds; five of everything. No luxury anywhere, and yet not cold efficiency. It is truly a Nursery, but it is not a home.

The garden is a pleasant, grassy spot in back of the playroom. It adjoins the area used for the public exhibitions, and is enclosed by the walls of the Nursery and a heavily latticed fence. A spirit of kindness and gentleness was apparent in the expressions of the school teacher, Miss Gaétane Vezina; of the head nurse, Miss Gertrude Provencher, R.N., and of Miss Isabelle Girard, R.N., the assistant to Miss Doreen Chaput, R.N., the superintendent.

Marie, Emilie, Cecile, Annette, Yvonne, Pauline, Thérèse, Daniel, aged nine, and six-year-old Oliva were romping about the playground. The children were summoned to meet the visitors, and very cutely, smilingly, they shook hands. *Les Jumelles* (as they call themselves) have most interesting, pert little faces. They are pretty children, with an eager, intelligent expression. They look alike but with variations. They act alike, but in their own, distinctive ways. Their eyes, olive-brown they seemed to me, are most alike in color and structure, but with different glints in them. All of them have a steady, sparkling, appraising way of looking at the visitors.

Their duty finished, the Quints seized on their father, and dragged him off by himself. All five were chirping about him and talking vivaciously at him. Then off they were at their play, with never a quiet moment. Spontaneous, high-spirited, gay, like healthy children of seven, they darted here and there, occasionally stopping for a word to the grown-ups. I felt a tug at my coat and looked back; it must have been the little mischief Emilie, laughing at me a few feet away, as if inviting me to chase her. Talking to the nurse, I saw a face peer up from under her cloak, this side, then that side, in a game. Off on the steps, one of them was laying down the law to little Oliva. The Quints are bright and unspoiled. They are perfect specimens of healthy, robust children. Mentally, they are better developed than girls of their age.

One of the small organs was, with much helping from all of them, brought out on the lawn. Father Casey sent them into ecstasies when he played *Allouette* and they all joined in the singing. Cecile, I think it was, then performed with her thumb, in a Canadian folk-song, and the musician, Annette, played the *Barcarole* with two fingers. They lined up to sing, their voices soft and clear, and they recited poems with graceful gestures. But not for long, since this was their play

period and they wanted to have their own fun in their own way.

Yvonne is the recognized leader. It was she, I learned, for I could not distinguish between them, that stood by me, very seriously, and beckoned me to bend down. She put her hand close to my ear and whispered in French. I did not fully comprehend at first, and asked her to repeat. What she said has haunted me ever since.

Yvonne whispered, very incisively: *Mon père, priez pour les jumelles, afin que bientôt elles demeurent avec Maman et Papa. Voulez-vous prier?* (Father, will you pray for the Quints, so that very soon they may go to live with Mamma and Papa. Will you please pray?)

I turned to look at this little girl, so serious, so terribly intent, having an air almost imperative. I found myself looking at her through watery eyes, as I tried to assure her that I certainly would pray that *les jumelles* might live with Mama and Papa.

Some time later, two of the others, Marie and Emilie, as far as I could determine, stood in front of me and spoke. I leaned down to listen to them.

One was saying, in a burst: *Mon père, amenez-nous donc chez-nous toute-suite, où notre Maman et notre Papa demeurent avec Victor et Pauline—allez-vous nous aider? Allez-vous prier pour nous?* (Father, bring us to our home right away, to where our Mamma and Papa live, Victor and Pauline. Will you please help us? Will you please pray for us?)

The other, with impatient gestures of her little arms, and eager motions of her head, kept repeating: *Oui! Toute suite! Immédiatement!* (Yes, right away, right away.)

I understood, and they knew I understood. They were impatient, and I felt impatient to help them. We kept nodding at one another.

Upon inquiry, I learned the full significance of their pathetic, eager pleading. Being seven years old, they are curious about many things, about where Pauline goes when she leaves them, about where baby Victor sleeps, about the house of their mother and father. They have been told a lot about their father's house, that it is just across the road from the Nursery. But they have never been in it, not since they were four months old, in 1934, not since they were brought from that home to the Nursery. They want to go to live in their father's house, *and now*. They have everything they need in the Nursery, they are happy in that way. But they want to go home. Each day as they grow older, they grow hungrier. After all, they are only five little girls aged seven.

I looked about the garden in which they were playing. It was pleasant, with green grass and trees and flowers. But it was enclosed by a high latticed fence, and by the walls of the Nursery. The public can look in on them, at certain hours of the day. But they cannot see the public, cannot see the hundreds of tourist cars, cannot see out on the road. They are not allowed to see anything, except their playground, the fences, the rooms where they live, the sun and sky above them. They have had stories told to them, they are beginning to read about other children, about homes and families, about

fields and cities. They see pictures and movies. But only once have they been permitted to go outside their fences, the day they were brought down to Toronto to meet their Majesties, their King and Queen. All the rest of their years, they have been shut-ins, cloistered as nuns.

When they were babies and toddlers, it did not make much difference. But now they are seven, and have reached the use of reason. They are growing restless, resentful, perplexed. But, according to the present decree of the Government and the decision of the Board of Guardians, they are not allowed outside of the walls of the Nursery for any reason whatsoever, not even for a few hours. Their imprisonment will continue for eleven more years, until they are eighteen.

Before I left that grassy garden of the Nursery, the full meaning of their whispered pleadings broke upon me. I think I found the secret of the Dionne Quintuplets. They are now seven years old and they are lonely, terribly lonely, little girls.

Pauline, less than a year older than the Five, fascinated me mightily. She is beautiful, and healthy, and normal. She has always lived with her mother. That evening, home she would go and leave her sisters. Oliva, a year younger than the Five, seemed to be a robust lad who has flourished under the care of his mother. All the other children were well taken care of, including Victor the youngest and Ernest the eldest. True, it would not have been so simple for Mrs. Dionne to handle five girls of the same age, all together. Undoubtedly, it was wise to give the Five over to specialists and technicians, and it would be unwise to relax the special care and protection. But the precarious years have passed.

Far from offering criticism of what has been, or is being done for the Quintuplets, I would heartily applaud all the extraordinary care. They have been saved for life, they have been kept healthy, they remain normal and natural. They are being well educated, and nicely cultured. They are well trained in their religion, have Mass and other services in their chapel, and are thoroughly pious.

Just now, the Dionne girls are reaching a crisis in their lives, not physical or moral, but an emotional and psychological crisis. The outcome will affect their souls, their minds, their personalities. The immediate present is hazardous for them. They cannot be kept prisoners, and remain normal. They cannot be treated as abnormalities, without being turned into neurotics. Their bodies have been marvelously well taken care of. It is imperative, now, to think of their minds and their personalities. It is dangerous to keep them shut off from the world.

What is the solution? That is found in the plea the children made to me. It is expressed in the word so often used by Mr. Dionne: "Reunion." Both the parents and the children are agreed fully: the Dionne family should live normally together.

When I asked Mr. Dionne for further explanation of his thought, he replied: "This house is too small. We shall build a larger house, back further from the road. I have three hundred acres of land.

In the roomier house which we shall build, we can all live together."

When it was objected that, perhaps, the children might be exposed to danger, he exclaimed: "I am their father, I love them. I would not expose them to any danger. In my house they will be better protected than they are now. Let them have their nurses and guards. Let there be a fence about the house. But let them live with their brothers and sisters in my house, not over there by themselves in the Nursery."

Mr. Dionne wants no luxurious living for himself or his children. He has no need for money for his family. He has no financial worries in regard to the Quints, for their wealth is about a million dollars. He is utterly opposed to any exploitation of his daughters, and complains bitterly that they are now being exploited, against his wishes. He is enraged at the way the children are shown as public spectacles. He expressed scorn, for example, of the pictures recently published, showing the children in bathing suits; that is contrary to his notions of modesty.

When asked if he would permit the public to see the children, he agreed: "Of course, if people want to see them. But not put them on the stage, like actresses or trained animals. I do not like to see them in the garden, riding their bikes. They can be seen with the other children. That can be easily arranged."

Mrs. Dionne was not so talkative. She has achieved success in rearing seven other healthy, happy children. She wants to have the Five united with her other seven. She wants, like any other mother, to have her daughters with her, in the evening when they go to bed, in the morning when they wake, through the day and all the day. She does not want to visit them only at Nursery hours. She can give them what no one else in the world can give, if only they would be permitted to live with her.

Mrs. Dionne would raise her daughters with a strict, yet a motherly discipline. I have her word for her wishes. She wants *les jumelles* to be well educated in the convent schools. And then, when they grow up, she would want them to marry some respectable lads, of family as good as the Dionnes or Legros. But if any one of them wanted to enter the convent, like their aunts, she would be very happy.

No Hollywood careers, no glamor-girl futures, no circus performances, no vaudeville acts are envisioned for the Five by Mr. and Mrs. Dionne. The only future they want is a simple, normal life in their own home. The Quints were saved, no doubt, by enclosing them in the Dafoe Nursery. They can only be saved, in their minds and souls, by releasing them from the Nursery and sending them back home, to Mama and Papa.

(The Quints and their parents ask your help. They wish only one thing: to be united and live together as a family. Address your views to Mr. Percy Wilson, Chief Guardian of the Dionne Quintuplets, Parliament Building, Toronto, Canada.)

THE FORUM IDEA GROWS MORE POPULAR

J. GEORGE FREDERICK

THE American answer to the spread of dictatorship and suppression of free speech throughout the world, appears to be an up-surge of more discussion and debate than ever known before. 300,000 attended public forums in 1940 in New York State alone; probably 10,000,000 throughout the nation.

This is saying a good deal, for America has had frequent periods of particularly violent discussion. These occurred in five especially marked periods: the colonial town meeting period, leading up to the Revolutionary War; the Andrew Jackson period; the temperance and anti-slavery periods; the grange-populistic period; the free silver trust-busting period. In between these exceptionally vivid discussion periods, the village general store served well for the cracker-barrel philosophers.

New ways of urbanized life since 1900, and pre-occupation with rapid material progress, to say nothing of the distractions of the automobile, the movies and the radio, produced a definite quieting down of discussion. There were, to be sure, small circles where it was kept alive; but, nationally speaking, America had almost deserted the public forum and keen discussion of social, economic and political issues. The Chautauquas, the lecture platform, the churches, etc., had turned more to humanitarian, literary, travel and cultural subjects. The discussion urge in America was distinctly flaccid; not even the World War revived it markedly, and the post-War prosperity was too engrossing.

It took the depression to jolt America from this attitude. No one escaped the painful surgery of panic and loss, and the experience brought quickly to life the latent American impulse to discuss earnestly, to argue, debate, theorize, invent political, economic and social panaceas, and to propagandize. And this time, rich and poor, farmer and city folk alike joined in; Huey Long's horde was matched by the Liberty League's luminaries. The New Deal became another broad national debate, like the issues Jackson and Lincoln set up; like free silver and anti-trust issues—both of which in their time had America debating from end to end, in mansion and hovel, farm and city, church and counting-house.

Today, the general intelligence is deeper, the issues wider, the debating at least slightly cooler, and the educational opportunity much greater. The outlook is not for a passionate temporary flare of debate upon a narrow issue, but for the arrival at adulthood of public discussion, with a more permanent and fixed place for it in a vigilant democracy. The public forum is establishing itself as an institution, as a working part of modern American machinery. As such it is highly significant, for democracy is on trial the world over, to see if it can

function without dictatorial leadership. If the citizen is not to be led by the nose, he must think; and if he is to think, he must discuss and debate, shaping his ideas in the rough and tumble of pro and con.

The public forum is a proved foremost tool in this work. As President Roosevelt said at one of the New York *Herald-Tribune* Forums:

The forum idea, conducted impartially, is an indication of the objectivity which most fairminded people seek. I cannot help but contrast a nation which more and more is encouraging any friendly discussion on all manner of public problems with those countries which unfortunately have made public discussion difficult, if not impossible. I like the forum idea. . . . May we have more of them and cover the country with them.

That hope is now rapidly coming to realization. The impulse is coming from three separate directions: (1) the program of local forums fostered by the Federal Office of Education; (2) the accelerated interest in colleges and schools in discussion; (3) whetted public appetite for discussion, resulting in widely varied discussion, such as the Town Meeting on the radio, public debates, meetings with open discussion periods, etc.

Outstanding are the local forums fostered throughout the country by the Federal Office of Education. These have had little national publicity, but have been astoundingly active. Before the national election, they might have been regarded as based on ephemeral political interest, but they have increased rather than decreased their popularity since the election.

The movement arose in Des Moines, Iowa, where J. W. Studebaker, Superintendent of Schools, began in 1931 to operate a community-wide system of forums, in as many as twenty separate neighborhoods, with as many as 500 or 600 meetings during the school year. Its success was so outstanding that Mr. Studebaker was appointed Federal Commissioner of Education by President Roosevelt in 1934. In 1935, an Emergency Relief appropriation of \$330,000 was made to establish forum demonstration centers in ten other localities in other States: Manchester, N. H., Schenectady, N. Y., Morgantown, W. Va., Chattanooga, Tenn., Wichita, Kans., Minneapolis, Minn., Colorado Springs, Colo., Santa Ana, Calif., Little Rock, Ark., and Portland, Ore. In 1936 and in 1937, nine more were added: Stamford, Conn., Dayton, Ohio, Seattle, Wash., Atlanta, Ga., Waco, Tex., Goldsboro, N. C., Delaware Co., Pa., Ogden, Utah, Milwaukee, Wis. In some instances, the zones covered by these centers included seven counties; and the total population reached was nearly four and one half millions, in nineteen States.

These forums are not operated Federally; local school boards and citizens' committees make policies and plans, and select subjects. Unemployed teachers and others are used. The forums are by no means single meetings in the centers named. The astonishing total of 155 community meetings *per week*, is the record for the center at Stamford, Conn., in rural as well as urban towns. In Minneapolis, forty to forty-eight forums per week are

operated. The nineteen centers are expected to stimulate other similar programs in various parts of the country, and also the continuance of the present programs beyond the twenty weeks provided for.

The forums do not foist unwanted topics on the people. Ballots are mailed to the people for subject choices. The forum leader presents the subject to the meeting impartially, with factual material from both sides, and then it is opened to discussion by the audience, the leader serving as "moderator."

In many communities both radio and newspaper spread the forum discussions, which fact induces leaders in business, politics and labor to address the forums, since they have become important platforms. General indirect results of these forums include greatly vitalized study of economic, political and social subjects in high schools; a strongly accented interest of young people in discussion; improvement and increase in home dinner conversation.

Youth has quite especially enlisted its interest in the forums, and youth has liked the mixing of youth with adult in forum attendance and discussion. The Colorado Springs forum had in attendance 4,819 men, 8,549 women and 1,885 young people.

The discussions are invariably orderly, thoughtful and stimulating, and the communities are unanimous in liking the idea. There is now hope that two- and three-year programs will be worked out, making the forums a vital, integral part of the adult civic education program.

Junior forums in high schools, colleges and universities are getting under way and, in addition, debate and discussion as a whole are gaining in all schools. There are indications of a real passion for discussion; a true sign that the events and conditions of today impress strong question marks on the minds of young people. They do not find in books the answers they seek, and they want to sharpen and clarify their own ideas against the whetstone of other ideas and critics. The problems of today are so many, so complex and so immediate that we cannot any longer pretend that ordinary life in America can prepare people for intelligent choice and decision. They must find a way to inform themselves and react on their own initiative, or else they are merely robots who can be herded by "rabble rousers" with sufficient astuteness.

Public discussion forums help people to come to know their own minds regarding important American questions, and to have greater confidence in their opinions, since they have tested them in discussions with others, tending to expose weakness, lack of logic, and incomplete information. America wants no more editorial pundits whose word it accepts as law. That was strikingly illustrated in the last election, when strong newspaper editorials apparently had smaller influence than ever before in America. America is now minded to think for itself. But it feels safer if it strikes its ideas against the flint of discussion and opposition, for then it believes the resulting modifications of extreme positions can produce sound thinking.

THE CHAPLAINS SWING ALONG WITH THE LADS IN THE CAMPS

J. GERARD MEARS

AS the defense program rolls along, young men from all parts of the country are being faced with drastic changes in their lives. Things are not going as they planned. Future business men, lawyers, writers, architects, artists and just easy-going boys with no definite careers in view, now find themselves parts of a huge machine, geared to produce a formidable army which will protect from all aggression the American way of life.

Everyone knows that we have 1,500,000 men and boys, from all levels of life, in Army camps through the country, undergoing intensive training as modern soldiers. It is one of those quickly developing and revolutionary phenomena of current history which we accept from the morning paper without fully understanding its significance or its full magnitude.

One has to visit some of these camps to realize fully what is going on, and how far we have advanced into the tremendous frenzy of war activity which has engulfed the world.

You drive off the main road in some remote section, past the MPs posted at the gate (incidentally there are apparently no restrictions on visitors and it is easier, at present, to enter an Army camp than the average art museum) and ride up a new military road through a quiet wooded countryside. A few miles further on a scene opens before you that is breath-taking. As far as you can see stretch row upon row of gray, shingled barracks, identical and monotonous, housing some 27,000 suddenly transformed lives.

From colleges, shops, offices and street corners a large cross-section of young and not so young men have been concentrated in this bleak and dusty strange new world to be transformed into trained soldiers for whatever lies ahead in the destiny of our Republic. A select and sturdy host of American youth has donned military khaki for better or for worse.

Americans have girded for war before this, but never before on such a large scale, or under peacetime conscription, or under circumstances demanding such intensive and technical training. This project definitely marks a new and unprecedented chapter in American history.

A large percentage of this new Army is Catholic. The figures are not yet completely obtainable, but it seems obvious from what figures we have, that the percentage of Catholics serving in the armed forces is in excess of the ratio of Catholics in the

general population of the country. The purpose, therefore, in visiting many of these camps, was to get a picture of how these boys were being cared for spiritually. What was the Chaplain's life and the Chaplain's influence in this new field? What sort of life did he lead? What success was he having? What part did he really play in the Army set-up and what cooperation was he receiving from Headquarters? And, finally, what help does he need?

The answers to these questions naturally vary in the different camps, even in different regiments of the same camp, just as they would in various parishes at home; but a composite picture can be drawn, which will give an idea of the nature, the difficulties, the limitations and the magnificent opportunities of the Chaplain's life. The various Chaplains, Protestant and Catholic, with whom I talked, may not find here the clear picture which they gave me of their own situation. A composite picture is necessarily a generalization.

Without exception the Army Chaplain's life is a hard one. The Army knows what it is doing in insisting on strict physical requirements. He is out of bed at five-thirty in the morning, preparing for six o'clock Mass (at which the daily attendance varies from fifteen to fifty) and he is lucky if he can get back into his little iron cot by midnight. His quarters are rough and bare and would remind you of those little plain board shacks which builders erect at the scene of new construction to house the blueprints. His work is never finished. His hours are limited only by his strength and zeal, and there is an abundance of both in the Chaplains whom I met. On maneuvers he marches and rides with his regiment, saying Mass and hearing Confessions on the back of a truck, sleeping in the open and sharing all the hardships of campaigning in the field.

The catch-as-catch-can ministrations on these convoys or maneuvers are particularly fruitful. Boys who have shied away from a regular confessional for years, find no difficulty in going to confession by a tree stump or the fender of a "jeep."

To get an idea of the magnitude of a Chaplain's task, consider this: in Catholic colleges there is an average of about thirty priests sharing in spiritual administration to every thousand boys. It is not unusual for a Chaplain, in the newly erected camps, to find himself solely responsible for the spiritual welfare of 1,700, or more, Catholics, and many

more non-Catholics, who come to him for help and counsel. It is a back-breaking job and yet the obvious necessity and the unusual opportunity for a harvest of souls, induces these men to exert every effort to keep up with their task.

At the end of the World War there were 1,023 Chaplains caring for about 1,000,000 soldiers. At present there are approximately 350 Chaplains for 1,500,000 men. Many more will soon be commissioned and many more are certainly needed. A more urgent need or a more fruitful ministry can hardly be conceived at the present time.

The everyday work of the Chaplain embraces much more than saying Mass (sometimes three times on Sundays and twice on weekdays by special privilege) and administering the Sacraments. He must give talks, instructions, devotions, but perhaps his most important work is done in private conversations with the soldiers. All day long he is to the soldiers what a corridor prefect is to the boys in a Catholic college. He is counselor and adviser; the men come to him when they have gotten into scrapes, appeal to him for special favors, bring him their personal troubles. These boys are not hard-boiled Army men, innured to Army life and discipline. They are the victims of the times in which they live. Some of them like the Army; some of them hate it; most of them merely endure it. The Chaplain is the recipient of all their reactions.

A sympathetic listener, an understanding adviser and a spiritual father is a great boon to these new soldiers and they see to it that he never has an idle moment. The line at his door includes Protestants and Jews, as well as Catholics, and one Chaplain, in less than ten months of service, has made ten converts and has twelve under instruction without the slightest attempt at proselytizing.

In his official capacity, he is really a morale officer, calling attention to needs and reasonable complaints, observing and taking steps to correct conditions which endanger morals. Occasionally he is asked to assist in recreational activities or to teach, but, in general, he is left perfectly free to devote all his time and energy to spiritual work.

And with what success are all these heroic efforts being crowned? When you talk with the Chaplains it is amazing how optimism and pessimism alternate in their reports. One will tell of a most discouraging condition where, in spite of all his efforts, two-thirds of the Catholics stay away from Mass and neglect the Sacraments; where even Catholic college graduates refuse to cooperate and moral conditions are deplorable. To listen to another, you would think that the Army was very close to a religious community; his services are crowded, his confessional thronged and he can rejoice in a phenomenal return to the Sacraments by those long absent, and extraordinary moral dangers are practically non-existent.

There are many reasons for these contradictory reports. Some Chaplains are fortunate in having under them a group of Catholics of a high type who are ready and eager for his ministrations; others have to start from scratch and try to re-

claim poor Catholics and awaken indifferent ones. Some, too, are fortunate in having enthusiastic and full cooperation on the part of their commanding officers in the matter of facilitating attendance and arranging time schedules. The fact that week-end leaves are so frequent at present, is a great help to morale and contentment, but leaves the Chaplain rather uncertain as to attendance at Sunday Mass and the Sacraments.

There is the same divergence of opinion, also, in the reply to the question: "Do you think that the morals of the men are more endangered in the Army camp than they would be at home?" The majority answer with a decided affirmative, but there are those who claim that there is actually less exposure to temptation because of the strenuous, active life and the efforts of the Army officials to remove from camp environs the traditional pitfalls of the soldier. The sudden appearance of Military Police doing sentry duty in front of their establishments has discouraged many an enterprising *entrepreneur* of vice, who had sensed lively business opportunities at the camps.

Nevertheless, most Chaplains agree that the trainee who comes to the Army and is thrown into this strange environment, "on his own," perhaps, for the first time in his life, associating with all kinds, from the best to the worst, torn from his normal surroundings and plunged into a hard, monotonous grind of military training, is certainly in great moral jeopardy. This is true especially when he is on leave, aimlessly looking "for a break." There are plenty of his companions and outside agencies eager to show him new and exciting ways of forgetting the tedium of Army life. Home and mother seem far away and, after all, "he's in the Army now."

The contention of the Chaplains that Army life presents to many a new and unique opportunity for renewing and strengthening their religious life, however, is certainly valid. The personal influence of the Chaplain is, in many cases, the first direct contact with religion, as a personal matter, which they have had. As one of the Chaplains put it to his charges: "All you have to do is to roll out of bed and Mass is at your doorstep. You will never have a better chance to be good Catholics."

For many of the boys, this cross-road in their lives is the first challenge to their Catholicism. There is no home influence to bolster their adherence to religious obligations. In the midst of indifference and worse, they have to decide whether to be loyal Catholics or succumb to their environment. To some, this is an incentive with a tonic effect; to others, it is an opportunity to lapse. This is a situation which keeps the Chaplains active from reveille to long after taps.

A Chaplain who was confined to the hospital during Holy Week and heard afterward of his Catholic boys on their own initiative setting up his Stations of the Cross in the recreation center, borrowing his Crucifix, binding it to a broom-stick, and going through with the services as best they could—is apt to be more optimistic than others.

(To be continued next week)

IF HATRED IS FUNNY THE "COMICS" WILL KILL YOU

HAROLD C. GARDINER

ATROCITY stories have bloomed in rank profusion in every war, I suppose, from the world's first to the present one. Fortunately, after the guns are silent and a modicum of sanity returns, most of these horrid tales prove to have been, like the rumors of Mark Twain's death, grossly exaggerated. Perhaps you remember the "authenticated" reports circulated during World War I by a committee headed by no less a person than the late Lord Bryce? They related thousands of instances of "Hun" barbarity and brutality, mainly in Belgium, and made fine reading for morbid souls—the only hitch was that most of these were proved later to have been absolute poppycock.

In the present actual conflict, these stories have been, thank God, relatively rare. But if the actual fighting has given rise to few blood-curdling reports, there does cluster around the whole Nazi regime a foul miasma of cruelty, cold-bloodedness and brutality which simply cannot be ignored. The frequency and violence of these degenerate traits may perhaps have been exaggerated, but certainly there have been and are concentration camps and Jewish purges and persecution of Catholics. Nazism has come to mean hate and cruelty.

It ought not be surprising that the full-blown Nazi comes to be branded with these marks of Cain. From the age of three, all the youth of Germany are reared on a philosophy which is rooted in contempt of others. This is the core of Nazi racism—to despise other bloods and races, and contempt and pride can and easily do sink still further, into hatred that finds expression in cruelty.

This warped, inhuman philosophy is inculcated by a system of education which "is so organized as to soak the child in military consciousness . . . a new sense of values has replaced the 'dull' Christian doctrines," and children are brought up in "sublime superiority of their own blood and race."

Even in the cradle, the good Nazi child is lulled to sleep with such kindly ditties as this, taken from the *Military Mother Goose*, published in 1935:

What puffs and patters,
What clicks and clatters?
I know what, oh, what fun,
It's a lovely Gatling gun.

And among many grounds for complaint against Christianity, the Nazi *Richtlinien* (Terms of Reference), for the direction of teachers of the Hitler-Jugend, lists this one, that "Christianity regards the German and Negro as equals." This is impor-

tant, as showing the "lines on which the future cream of the Party is being taught to think."

Such a training, in the nature of men and things, *must* have the result of rearing in Nazidom a race that hates, that condemns, that despises all others. And this is the result: a recent book, for example, which was the diary of a captured *Luftwaffe* flyer, is thus described in a review in *Newsweek* for July 28:

Leske . . . has a superman cockiness. Chivalry is the bunk . . . and he constantly crows over the misery of his enemies. The Nazi sneers at his . . . opponents—he also sneers at his Italian comrades in flight. The Nazi talks of nothing else . . . but how tough he is.

Now, all this is a revolting and most inhuman picture, and we shudder to think of the monsters children will become who are raised on this diet of hate and contempt.

But take a stroll around your neighborhood some day and glance over the "comic" magazines gaudily displayed on the newsstands. They are for the youngsters, and they sell to the tune of about a million dollars a week. The average price is ten cents, so that we reach the staggering conclusion that about 10,000,000 copies are circulated each week. A visit to a near-by newsstand, and not too large a one, at that, revealed *forty-two* various publications of this type. Most of them are printed in three- and four-color processes, and this, even on cheap paper, is expensive. Apparently they pay.

All these "comics," almost without exception, under the impact of the war, are filling millions of American young people with the same identical doctrine of hate, of contempt, of haughty superiority which has made Nazism hateful.

Let us open a few. We discover that Superman has by now spawned dozens of degenerate kindred. There are human torches, human icebergs, human submarines, python men, all with superhuman strength and invincibility. And they are all devoted, nowadays, to tracking down spies and saboteurs.

All this, you say, might well pass muster as being just a little exaggerated melodrama, just fantasy that runs a bit fantastic. But how are all the "enemies of democracy" pictured? Every one of them is a brutalized, vicious monster, inhuman, sadistic and ultimately, of course, when the showdown comes, sure to cringe, blubbering cravenly, before the clean, manly, upstanding young American hero.

One serial, for example, introduces us to "the cruel, vicious Sooka, commander of the submarine pack sent out by the invader to harass the shipping of the democracies. Naturally vicious, the war has turned him into a maniac whose only pleasure is conquest, death and destruction." And he looks the part, as he gloats over shelled life-boats and swimming survivors left to the sharks.

Another features the Devil, who is hired by a European employer (obviously a brutalized German) to abduct Americans for use as cannon-fodder in his future battles—and the lurid pictures show us row on row of the drugged bodies, of both sexes, laid out in the hold of the ship.

One "patriotic comic" magazine provides, for the nurture of the young mind, a skeleton-faced Nazi "ringmaster of death," spinning his wheel to see whom he will next deliver to the mercies of his henchmen, who are a missing link, bestial strongmen and a deformed dwarf. This Nazi fiend, as well as the Japanese (called "oriental" only, with sweet reticence) "master of evil," take great delight in inflicting torture, which is, of course, drawn with no softening of detail.

Perhaps your children would prefer another play-mate, let us say, the python man. He slobbers and drools, and metes out merciless floggings to piteous heroines, and (sure enough) refers to the Nazis as "his countrymen." Or maybe a chummiest friend for your children may be the saboteur, who uses his death-ray to scorch his victims' faces into leering, fleshless, mummy-masks (all nicely drawn).

What child with normal reactions can read these monstrosities week after week without being impelled to hate and loathe the Germans, all Germans, and not merely Nazism, which we all hate?

And the doggerel put into the mouths of these villains! It is pitifully laughable to an adult reading it, but I am afraid that the laughs it stirs in the young are sniggers of contempt, for it makes these "comic" Germans not only brutal but stupid. Every villain has something to say like: "der signal comt vrom der leader; ve are going to zpray der zity mit zleep gas; goot, ve haf caught der Britisher dog." And the clean, noble young Americans always refer to the Germans as "dirty rats, bloodthirsty Huns," while they themselves are "democratic swine."

And so, the inculcation of hate goes on. I am convinced that no American child can read these rags for long without being persuaded that every German is an unspeakable beast, and that one Yank, with "democracy" on his handsome, laughing lips is better and finer in all conceivable ways than a dozen "Nazi dogs." If this be not a philosophy of hatred and contempt, I am afraid I do not understand my native tongue.

Oh, yes, in the old days we read our fantastic tales; we made incredible voyages with Jules Verne; we can remember burying our noses in copies of the old *Argosy-All-Story* magazine, which specialized in tales of trips to Mars and life on a marvelous earth in the thirtieth century. We devoured our dime novels, with their all pure white heroes and unmitigated black villains.

But these were stories, first of all, and not portrayed in lurid, taste-debasing pictures, and secondly, in none of these tales of fantasy and adventure was one nation ever so viciously and consistently lampooned and pilloried as the Germans are in our modern "comics."

And do these preachments of hate actually have this effect on the American youth, or is this whole article merely a theoretical discussion that breaks down when applied to life? Well, we maintain no Gallup poll to canvass the millions of children who read these magazines, but I do have a letter on my desk from an eleven-year oldster, which may well be a substantial straw in the wind. It reads, in part:

My oldest brother, 15, is inventing a death ray to destroy human monsters like in *Captain America* [these monsters are all Nazis] . . . I buy army bombers, pursuit planes to bump the Nazis off when I'm bigger. . . . Us kids have piles of machine guns, pistols, cannons and soldiers. We use half for Germans and half on Italyens. . . .

"Out of the mouths of babes". . . ?

Writing to a correspondent recently, the Editor of the *Saturday Evening Post* found himself forced to admit that

it is a sinister thing that the comics should be turned to war propaganda . . . but this propaganda is all pervasive anyway and a child who never saw a comic strip would still not escape it. The radio, motion pictures, the news columns, Boy Scout troops, even the games boys play, will reflect this drive toward war increasingly.

Our drift toward war may be accelerating and inevitable. It may be. But if we are actually to enter the shooting stages, how can we do it with clean hands and consciences, if we are swept into it on a wave of hate and contempt for fellow humans? Lamentably enough, expressions of these low passions have found their way into the public statements of those who profess to be fighting for Christian ideals. Witness Churchill's unfortunate reference not long ago to "killable Germans," and his determination, stated in a recent speech, to give Berlin as much and more in the way of bombing as London had got. This "eye for an eye" philosophy, un-Christian as it is, is more or less understandable in grown people who are actually suffering the ravages of modern war, but when it finds vivid expression directed toward the minds of children in a nation that is still presumably at peace, what possible excuse is there?

Your children's reading is being guided into those foul channels, if they are devotees of the comic magazines today. You owe it to yourselves and them and to God that their leisure moments will not be saturated with the very doctrines we shudder at in the Nazi young, the doctrines of race superiority, of disdain for others, of hatred and of sneering contempt.

If the OPM wants to do a good job for the future morale of this nation, it will save paper, when the threatened paper shortage becomes more acute, by curtailing the supply available to these magazines. It is a shame to see good white paper smeared over with pictures and messages that can ruin the good white minds and souls of the young.

AID FOR BOLSHEVISM

WE can understand why Mr. Harry Hopkins was lavish in his promises of aid to the dictator, Stalin. For he is the man who is reported to have said a few years ago, that in pursuance of national reforms it was proper to "tax and tax, spend and spend, elect and elect."

But we doubt that the American people would today elect him to any office of importance on that platform.

If it is really necessary for us to save gasoline, and to limit the current that goes into the ice-box and the radio, then it is high time to find out why. For necessary public defense, and that means defense of the United States, the American people will grudge not a penny. But when their munitions are diverted to a Government presided over by an unmitigated scoundrel named Stalin, they are entitled to demand and receive an explanation of this extraordinary course.

What is badly needed at Washington is a Congress that will take care of the American people. We are for rightful liberty in all its varieties, but we are not going to have much of any kind of liberty if the resources of this country continue to be sluiced into foreign pools. Probably most of us would rather be hungry freemen than fat slaves, but we do not understand why a choice should be forced on us at this moment. This is a country in which it is supposed to be possible to be both free and well-fed. But now it seems that we must go hungry, while Great Britain and the Bolsheviks fight over priorities; that is, over property which the American people have paid for, and for which they may never get a penny in return.

The American people are fed up on promises. We had many a quarter of a century ago, and practically every one was broken. In addition, we were reviled as misers and usurers, when we reminded our creditors of their promises. Stalin, it is now reported, has promised to pay for all supplies bought in this country, but it is not possible to put much faith in that promise. Whether made to Great Britain, or to ourselves some eight years ago, Stalin has not kept his promises. He can never be trusted, since faith and honor mean nothing to him. Whatever goes to aid God-hating, liberty-destroying, Communistic Russia, will be paid for by the hunger and toil of American citizens.

Hence it seems to us that some precaution should be taken that the arms sent to Stalin will never be used against us. What that precaution ought to be, we cannot say. Perhaps all that can be done after the delivery of munitions, is to regard Stalin as an enemy now doubly-armed, and then to take such measures as may be possible to hold him in leash. Since Stalin has repeatedly demonstrated that he will keep faith with no one, it would be fatal to trust him in the future.

There is one, and only one, ray of consolation in this all-out aid for Bolshevism campaign. Our ears will no longer ring with the cant of aid to "democracies everywhere."

EDITOR

PROPAGANDA

YEARS ago John Bright wrote: "You will find that wars are supported by a class of arguments which, after the war is over, the people find were arguments that they should never have listened to." But another war comes, and brings with it supporting evidence for the adage of the Roman cynic that the people love to be deceived. We were deceived in the early years of the World War by skilful agents sent from abroad, and we are still paying for that disaster. We shall pay far more, should Congress close its ears to the incessant appeals of the American people who want peace.

THROWING OUT

DURING the War between the States, the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War was usually a battlefield. Like most committees of the kind, it had its share of partisans who saw nothing in the war but an opportunity to advance their selfish interests by punishing their enemies and by rewarding their friends, no matter what the result to the commanders and the men in the field. But as a concrete expression of the principle that the military forces are under the control of the civil government, it justified its existence. If it was guilty of occasional injustice, and of more than occasional follies and ineptitudes, it served to check other and more dangerous excesses.

The Committee recently appointed by the Senate to investigate the progress of the national defense program is not a counterpart of the Committee of eighty years ago. But like that Committee, it can fulfil a needed function. While the Committee has not filed a formal report, the general complexion of its findings was expressed last week by Chairman Truman in one sharp sentence. "We thought the Army was rotten, but the Navy is worse."

What prompted this sweeping condemnation was the admission by Commander Ort that the Department had no complete record of the equipment which it has rented for its construction work. Cross-examination brought out some interesting but, it is to be hoped, unusual examples of carelessness, or worse. Not infrequently, the Government paid more in rentals than the equipment was actually worth. It is

REDEMPTION

AS the Holy Father said in his address on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, we must not be scandalized when we see the power of the enemies of Christ and His Church. The mission of the Church may seem to be checked, and the children of the Church will be grievously afflicted, but our trust in God "means believing firmly that despite the fierce intensity of the trial, the triumph of evil here below can last only for a limited period, and no longer." Suffering is our lot in this time of pilgrimage, but we suffer with Him Who by His death on Calvary won our redemption.

OUR MONEY AWAY

unfair, as the Commander protested, to draw a general conclusion from half a dozen "isolated" instances, but we may be permitted to wonder whether these cases are "isolated." Admission by the Government that it does not know how much equipment has been rented is at least *prima facie* evidence of gross carelessness. The head of a construction company, responsible to his stockholders, assuredly would not hold his position long, were he guilty of similar carelessness.

The approach of war is certainly not a general permission for every public official to spend money recklessly. It is, rather, a stern warning to cut off every needless expense. Two thousand years ago, a nation might hope to recoup its war-expenditures by seizing the treasures of the enemy, but today war means heavy loss to every participant. We are not going to have more money, should we be plunged into this European war, but less, and the expenditures we shall be forced to make will burden generations to come. A glance at the tax-bill now brewing in Congress is enough to give us a frightening idea of what that burden will be.

The least, then, that we can ask from the Government is to cut off needless appropriations, no matter what the anguish to politicians and their friends who have fattened at the public trough for the last decade, and to supervise with unusual care the appropriations which must be made. "If we use these carefully," as Chairman Truman says, "we may be able to get two battleships instead of only one."

ZERO CONFERENCES

NO one likes to hear that more than 150,000 operators in the silk industry will soon be thrown out of work. It is not pleasant to know that almost as many may lose their jobs because of the order by Secretary Ickes which closes all oil and gas stations in the Eastern States from seven in the evening until seven the next morning. Only a few weeks ago, it seemed that our vast preparations for national defense had practically abolished unemployment, but it now appears that unemployment in some fields is actually increasing. Some of these unemployed may later be absorbed by the defense industries, but that is not much consolation for the man who must buy food and clothing for his family during that uncertain interval.

Unforeseen difficulties are slowing up the task of putting the country on a basis of active preparation for war, without at the same time completely ruining all industries not connected with the manufacture of munitions. Just at present, according to R. J. Thomas, president of the United Automobile Workers, affiliated with the C.I.O., the Government seems to have a policy of neither business as usual, nor total-defense production. To try to follow a policy of that kind is very much like trying to ride two horses going in opposite directions.

There are men at Washington who can answer most of the difficulties. One trouble may be that there are too many capable men who do not see eye to eye, and although they differ from one another only in accidental details, their varying opinions have the effect of choking production before it is really well started. One plan offered to the U.A.W. at Washington some weeks ago would have shut down many plants in favor of munition factories, but the effect would be "that some large automobile-producing centers like Flint, Saginaw and Pontiac might become ghost towns." To this solution the workers would not have objected, provided that the factories could be completely utilized for the production of war materials. But the next that the U.A.W. heard of this plan was that it had been abandoned. Certainly, the enforced unemployment of some 200,000 automobile workers would, as Mr. Thomas said, "constitute a serious threat to our national economy which, in turn, might seriously impair our defense morals and our defense program."

The manifold difficulties of this situation cannot be dissipated by wishful thinking. These difficulties exist, and in all probability will return in an exaggerated form to plague us more sorely, should we chance to become more deeply engaged in this European war than we now are. But it does seem to us that the solution offered by Mr. Thomas for our present troubles has the merit that attaches to simplicity and novelty. Let the Government confer with the manufacturers and the workers, and reach an agreement for the diversion of steel and other defense materials from non-defense industries to defense industries on an equitable basis. If such an agreement can be found, then the Government's

plans for defense will not suffer, and the burden arising from shortage of material will be evenly distributed. Meanwhile, all the resources of the Government and of private research laboratories can be used to develop satisfactory substitutes for the materials diverted from the non-defense industries.

Conferences often offer a convenient means of getting rid of an unwelcome task. It is also true, unfortunately, that nothing is gained by appointing a committee that has neither power to initiate action, nor to order the proper agencies to follow a prescribed line of action. A mere list of the committees, agencies, bureaus and departments which have been established at Washington since we began to prepare for national defense would fill a fair-sized volume. But it may be possible not only to create the conference suggested by Mr. Thomas, but to clothe it with authority. Of our present Federal creations, it is hardly possible to find one that is not a zero without an indicating digit.

NO DULL BRITONS

WE love our British cousins, with a love that wishes them all needed to save their bodies and souls. We also admire them immensely for their worldly acumen. To us Yankees, they have applied the epithet "slick," and they think that "efficiency" is primarily an American trait.

But we are neither slick nor efficient, neither we civilians, nor our soldiers and officials. Compared with them, we are but dull clods unlit by any spark, pathetic stumblebums in government and diplomacy.

These thoughts have been suggested by a dispatch or two from Washington. American civil-service employes are never paid by our Government for over-time work. In some bureaus, but not in all, they are graciously permitted to add this over-time, provided it is within a specified limit, to their annual vacation.

More fortunate are the workers in the many British agencies which make some parts of Washington look like Downing Street. Some of these workers are Americans, but most of them are British, and all are treated with impartial justice. When they work over-time, they are paid, as is proper, for time and one-half.

But the British Government does not pay this over-time.

It is paid by you and me, and the rest of us Americans, with American money allotted under the liberal terms of the Lend-Lease Act.

Some Britons may look stupid, and are. Some Britons in the British service also look stupid, but they never are. In fact, we can never hope to fathom the depths of their slickness and efficiency. But we are learning more and more, as this all-out aid to Britain goes on.

We love our British cousins, and wish them well. But would it not be possible to allot American money under the Lend-Lease Act to pay American workers time and one-half for over-time?

SPEAKING CORRECTLY

IT not infrequently happens that when the priest is summoned, the sick man can no longer speak or hear. With a false kindness, his family and friends have waited too long. Yet even then an extraordinary grace is sometimes given through the sublime prayers of the Church, pleading for her recreant son or daughter, and for a few moments the patient revives, and is able to make his peace with God through a good confession. But this does not always happen, and then the priest, after doing all that is possible for the sick person, leaves him to the infinitely tender mercy of Our loving Saviour.

Probably the incident recorded in the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Mark, vii, 31-37) will recur to the mind of the priest, as he goes back to the parish house. Here we have the story of the miraculous cure of "one deaf and dumb" who had been brought to Jesus. At the word and touch of the Master, "his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak correctly." Although Our Lord charged both him and his companions to "tell no one," and even insisted upon this mandate of silence, they disobeyed, and their happy disobedience has been recorded for our edification by the Evangelist. What happened to this man in later life, we do not know, but since it is quite certain that Jesus healed his soul as well as his body, we may be sure that to the end of his days he spoke "correctly." That is the lesson for me, reflects the priest, and it is the lesson for all of us; to speak "correctly."

But what does it mean to speak "correctly"? It means, first of all, to think correctly, that is, to have right ideas about God, about religion, about our duties to God and to our brethren, since what is in the mind sooner or later is in our words and our deeds. More in detail, it means, after we have trained ourselves to think correctly, to make a right use of our tongue.

Here Saint James will be our instructor. In his Epistle, the Saint tells us that "if anyone does not offend in word, he is a perfect man." (iii, 2.) The tongue is hard to manage, for it can be a "very world of iniquity . . . defiling the whole body, and setting on fire the course of our life, being itself set on fire by hell." (iii, 6.) Saint James singles out for special censure lying and uncharitable words, and very properly, for these can be dreadful evils. But we can also misuse the tongue by keeping silent when we should speak, particularly when evil is done in our presence, and more particularly, by not confessing our sins when confession is morally necessary for our salvation, or by not confessing them fully.

If we are wise, we shall speak to God in kindly words said to our neighbors, and in words of condemnation said to ourselves, and we shall not wait until our deathbed to begin. If we do, the priest of God may find us deaf and unable to speak. Short of a miracle, we cannot learn to speak "correctly" in a moment. That is the task of a lifetime, and we cannot begin it too soon.

CORRESPONDENCE

HOT POTATO

EDITOR: I felt I had to type a page in answer to that dastardly *Chat in Charcoal*, by Raymond A. Grady (AMERICA, July 5th). Bad enough to print those subversive articles at all, let alone at Fourth of July time!

I write as an old-time summer resident of Maine. Raymond, Ogunquit, Boothbay and Center Lovell can bear witness to my fidelity.

Our Maine folk have their defects, such as cussin' a good deal (we need more of the Church in Maine), but they are men enough to eschew burning charcoal for a living. And that talk about defending the Maine potato market from the Governor of Idaho—jumpin' hornpouts! Ask the potato farmers of America where they get their seed potatoes. We can't even get our own Maine Aroostook potatoes for our table, here in Oxford County, they're so eagerly bought up. I say to Mr. Grady, "Raymond, tend your own garden!"

Center Lovell, Me. VINCENT W. HARTNETT

NUNS' HABITS

EDITOR: The Sisters with whom I have lived entered religion to work for God and for His people, thereby making sure of the reward He has promised to those who have left all for His sake. The habit is an accidental; it just happens to be that of the Order doing the work they felt drawn to, and able to do. Then, again, the habit is one form of penance and mortification which all Religious must practice in one way or another. It seems to me that quite enough of the world has gone soft, without starting a campaign to make the Sisters so.

On certain days the habit is hot, of course. But I can truthfully say that I have been able to stand it, with no more discomfort than people who are running around half clothed, and dashing off to the beach as soon as the mercury starts to go up. We have all lived through summer school, and are doing it this year, and we shall be able to go right back to a full year of hard work. I don't hear any nuns getting excited about it.

The girls who would not enter because the habits were so heavy have never worn them. And if that reason keeps them out, it is better for the convents that they stay out. How much could they do for God if they can't bear to suffer a little heat? No girl with a true vocation would give a thought to the weight of a habit; she would be too anxious to be allowed to wear it. I have been wearing heavy habits for thirty years, and will be content and happy to wear them thirty more. If you could see me you would not think the experience had done me any harm!

"A hundred years ago convents did not have electricity, running water, etc.," says your Dan-

bury correspondent. Isn't that an argument on our side? In the heavy habits we do not have to work half as hard as we did even thirty years ago. And maybe it would not be so foolish as he thinks to use candles, and break the ice in our basins. It would be mighty good training and discipline. Saints have been made in doing just such foolish things.

Don't worry about us. We love the habits we wear, just as they are. And sometimes we are not half as hot as we look, or as one thinks we look.

Boston, Mass.

HAPPY NUN

SUMMARY VIEW

EDITOR: Sound advice in moral problems of public moment is one of the services readers of AMERICA naturally expect of it. Henry Watts has instanced such a problem in a letter (July 26), the problem of the conscientious objector. AMERICA has hitherto done less than I should have expected to dissipate current confusions in this matter. The incautious reader might even find his confusions confirmed by an oblique reference to the question in an editorial of the same date. Suppose he is "the man who has reached the conscientious conclusion that since the conditions which alone can justify war have not been verified, our entrance into war would be a national crime." Ought he therefore to refuse military service in case of war?

I should reply that the responsibility of a government in committing the country to war is one thing; that of the citizen in refusing military service is quite another. Culpably imprudent though the government may conceivably be in getting into a state of war, the citizen's refusal to cooperate in the armed service of his country would appear to be a form of sedition unless the sole or principal object of the war were manifestly unjust.

I think it contrary to the common good of the American people that we should under any presently foreseeable circumstances accept the role of a belligerent in the European war. Such a reason, if sound in itself, ought certainly to be peremptory with the President and Congress of the United States. But if war were nevertheless declared, I should recognize that in fighting Hitler we were fighting an international outlaw, one of very sinister omen who is very much at large. I should recognize that any country, even if not attacked, could bring its armed forces to bear on him without injustice if it chose to do so. I should recognize finally that, given the fact of such a war, the common good of the country required the loyal cooperation of all citizens toward its successful prosecution, even though for that very reason the war ought antecedently to have been avoided. This is necessarily a summary statement of my opinion. . . .

West Baden, Ind. EDGAR R. SMOTHERS, S.J.

AUTOGRAPH

EDITOR: I have in my possession a letter of Colonel Zephaniah Swift, of Revolutionary fame and Chief-Justice of the State of Connecticut, written in 1794 to Governor Samuel Huntington, Signer of the Declaration of Independence. America then faced a war not with Germany or Japan or Italy but with England. Feeling against the British ran high. President Washington's position in this crisis is noteworthy. In Chief-Justice Swift's own words:

The conduct of the President of the United States in issuing his proclamation of Neutrality has met in Europe with that high applause which it deserves. His late exertions to save our Country from the calamity of a war deserve equal commendation. At a time when many of our Citizens were zealous for war—when a measure was under discussion in the House of Representatives, which was calculated to produce that effect and in favor of which it was apparent there was a Majority, the President stepped forward and in the exercise of a constitutional power Resisted the torrent that threatened to deluge our Country in ruin. The well-timed act of nominating Mr. Jay to be Envoy extraordinary to the Court of London gave the Friends of Peace firm ground on which to stand and which they will not abandon. A singular concurrence of circumstances had taken place that throw a peculiar lustre on the character of the President. In a long and arduous war he displayed the talents of the great General in leading our armies to Victories that established our Independence, and in times of peace he had displayed equal talents in saving us from the horrors of war.

It will be seen from this that world affairs in that year were somewhat similar to those of today.
New York, N. Y. MARY A. BENJAMIN

CAPTAIN PAUL

EDITOR: Raymond J. McInnis' review of *Captain Paul* (John Paul Jones) is hardly adequate for the purposes of reviews in AMERICA. An acquaintance with original material would have indicated it to him.

The patent conclusion from Jones' lengthy letters (official communications) to Robert Morris, Minister of Marine, during the War of the Revolution is that he was a man of unbridled ambition, unconscionable; in attitude, a rationalist (an esoteric Freemason of the French Orient); in practice, a mercenary (he sold his services at the end of the Revolution, at the suggestion of Robert Morris, to Catherine of Russia in her war with the Turks). He was a constant annoyance to Robert Morris and continually insisted in his communications that he fought not as an American but as a citizen of the world, and not for American freedom but for the rights of man. If it may be stated as a truism that the heroes in a victorious cause will not lack for glory from their comrades in the fight, why did his remains rest in an unknown Paris grave until 1905? And why, during the Revolution, was every portentous naval assignment entrusted to Barry and not Jones?

That these distortions are not mere dramatic license may be gleaned from the use to which they have been put in current polemics. *Time* referred

to John Paul Jones, "father of the American navy," and the motion picture *Adventure in Washington* flaunted "liberty, equality, justice, humanity" as the crystallization of the American ideal when, in fact, it is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The former is a slick paraphrase of the rationalistic slogan "liberty, equality, fraternity" of the French Orient of Freemasonry.

San Francisco, Calif. JOHN F. QUINLAN, M.D.

EDITOR: Paul Jones may have been the most despicable character of the eighteenth century. He may have chivied our noblest citizens no end. He may conceivably have been possessed by a devil. I don't know, and have no interest at all in finding out. I never held for an instant that he was a nice character to put in a book.

But I do hold that a fine book has been written about Paul Jones—a book that has episode, verve and interest. Milton wrote a pretty good epic about a "wrong one." I can still read *Paradise Lost* with affection and yet renounce the devil with all his works and pomps.

S. Norwalk, Conn.

R. J. McINNIS, S.J.

AID TO RUSSIA

EDITOR: The President of the United States has committed this country to aid to anti-Christian Russia. The Hierarchy have wisely refrained from making any official pronouncement until all sides of the question have been studied.

The Church undoubtedly will suffer severe material loss if it dares to condemn cooperation with the Soviet either directly or indirectly. Can the Church in America survive heavy material loss? On the other hand can the Faith in America survive silence on the part of our spiritual leaders? Will not failure to condemn in unequivocal terms any cooperation, direct or indirect, with Communist Russia rend the Church from top to bottom?

What will be the result of a declaration by the American Hierarchy that no Catholic can in conscience cooperate in any way whatsoever with Government plans to help anti-Christian Russia—through taxes, by working in industries turning out materials destined to be used as war aid to Russia directly or indirectly through Britain, by helping to convoy or otherwise protect shipments of supplies to Russia either directly or indirectly, or by taking up arms in defense of Russia or enlisting in any army or navy giving aid to Russia?

What effect will the failure to make such a forthright statement have?

New York, N. Y.

A. J. REILLY

SPAIN

EDITOR: Having read the articles in the *Saturday Evening Post* by James Wood Johnson, describing the tragic conditions amongst the poor of Spain, I too join with your correspondent, Patricia Mary Swing, in hoping something can be done and immediately. I am willing to help. Show us the way.

West Newton, Mass.

MICHAEL J. COEN

LITERATURE AND ARTS

CATHOLIC WRITERS' HALL OF FAME

CATHERINE M. NEALE

CATHOLIC Action is vital in the world today, and the apostolate of letters is one of its most important activities—if not *the* most important. For in cultivating the mind, we nourish the spirit, and spiritual aspirations are the highest given to men. To make letters a cogent force in life, a union of effort is most desirable, and it is the work of the Gallery of Living Catholic Authors to unite the literati, and to bring together their works. Its membership is based on merit, and the writings of Gallery members are collected within the Gallery for all time. Begun nine years ago, it will eventually be a monument of Catholic letters.

The founder of the Gallery is a Sister of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross, Sister Mary Joseph, whose constant and special interest has been living authors. Her M.A. thesis was written on living Catholic essayists, but when she wished also to write her Ph.D. thesis on contemporary authors she found the subject was not considered scholarly enough: the great were only truly great when acclaimed over the passage of time. Thereupon, she determined to make contemporary writers better appreciated. Her Superior gave her permission to devote her time to this purpose, and during nine years she has striven zealously to make Catholic authors better known.

At Webster Groves, Mo., she was given space in one of the buildings for manuscripts, autographed photographs and letters of authors. The Gallery, though housed at the College, is quite distinct from it. It is international in scope, for it includes authors not only from the United States but from Belgium, England, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Some day it will have its own building, but where that will be depends upon the donor who will be generous enough to give it a home. Plans for a building were given to the Gallery by Ralph Adams Cram, but as yet funds have not been available for its erection.

It was proposed this year to bring the Gallery to New York, today's literary center of the world. European literati have flocked in great numbers to our shores, and New York is always their first, and often permanent, harbor. For there are centered publishing activities; there one feels most sensitively the pulse of the world. It is hoped to

establish a Literary Center there, enriched by the Gallery collection, where those who write, and those interested in literature, can come for research or information on literary activities, where they can gather informally at any time, or on set occasions for lectures, discussion, teas, etc. Such a Center as this would vitalize Catholic letters, would make Catholics vocal, more definitely heard in the literary field. We could become a *united* force. But such a project needs support by those financially able to undertake it.

A visitor to Webster Groves may see along both sides of the 130-foot central corridor of Gallery Hall cases three and one-half feet high containing photographs, letters and manuscripts of authors. There are, in all, 25,000 pages of manuscript, over 300 letters and photos. There is also a card catalog giving biographical and bibliographical data on 5,000 authors. The original autographed photographs are copied and pages of manuscript are photostated for exhibition purposes. Many letters and photographs are mounted on a six-foot panel that can be used at various meetings, conferences and conventions throughout the country. Also, in her illustrated lectures at clubs, schools and colleges all over the United States, Sister Mary Joseph uses lantern slides which give the audience acquaintance with the authors and their works.

Especially do children's books lend themselves to this picturization, through their gay jackets and illustrations. A special section of the Gallery devoted to writers of juvenile literature was established this year, the Committee being under the chairmanship of Mary Kiely, of the Pro Parvulis Book Club. Authors already chosen for that section are Nina Otero, Alan Buck, Richard Bennett and Hilda Van Stockum, as well as Francis Downey, S.J., and Mary Kiely. Other writers for juveniles are under consideration for inclusion. Already members of the Gallery and also known for their books on children are Father Neil Boyton, S.J., Padraic Colum, Henri Ghéon and Seumas MacManus.

The Gallery has 291 living members at present. Some chosen within the last nine years have since died, among them G. K. Chesterton, who was unanimously elected to the academy but died before the Gallery was formerly inaugurated. The

photographs of those deceased, their manuscripts and letters are moved to a special section of the Gallery.

New members are elected each year, on the basis of merit. Membership is unlimited in number and unhampered by membership dues. The member has everything to gain, and nothing to lose. Election is by a Board of Governors, made up of twenty librarians, editors, authors, publishers, educators and literary critics. These Board members are chosen for a term of years, so that in time certain governors are replaced by others. The chairman of the Board is Francis Talbot, S.J. The Committee on Juvenile Literature has five members. A majority of votes is required for election of members of the Gallery. This year, the St. Louis Consultive Committee, formed in March, and made up of twenty-six educators, editors and librarians, under the Chairmanship of Monsignor John Spencer, are preparing biographical and bibliographical data on authors to be voted on at the Board meeting. This data is submitted to the governors and their majority vote rules.

Also to be voted on this fall, at the Board meeting, is the annual award to be given by the Gallery to the best works of its authors during the year. Again the St. Louis Consultive Committee will submit data on various books and their authors, to be passed on by the Board, their vote to be final. This honorary award, to be presented on the Feast of Christ the King, will be an incentive to Gallery members.

To all writers, and our younger writers especially, membership in the Gallery should itself be an incentive to excellence. To be included among the literary great is an inspiration to achievement. It is a much desired recognition, a tangible expression of approval. Moreover, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, bestowed the Apostolic Blessing upon the members of the Gallery. This blessing carries with it a plenary indulgence at the hour of death for each author-member.

To all Gallery members there is the incentive of Academy membership. The Academy is based upon the idea of the famous French Academy. It is to be made up of forty contemporary immortals, twenty-five non-American and fifteen American writers. It was originally planned that members should be elected to it each year until the quota was reached. Thus, there are now thirty-seven members, there being no election in 1940. Outstanding excellence is necessary; in the Academy are such famous names as Karl Adam, Hilaire Belloc, Paul Claudel, Johannes Jorgensen, Giovanni Papini, Agnes Repplier and Sigrid Undset.

Manuscripts, photographs and letters are the personal element that makes the Gallery unique. But books are also a most important feature of the Gallery collection. It is hoped in time to have a complete library of contemporary Catholic literature. Having no appropriation for a library, the cost makes this prohibitive all at once, but books by Gallery members are gradually filling the shelves, and the publishers have been very generous in helping toward this. Within the last five

months all publishers have been approached and the response has been most gratifying. But unfortunately many books wanted for the Gallery are out of print.

Then there are the magazines containing articles, poems and stories by Gallery members that must be obtained in order to fulfil the Gallery plan to have *all* the writings of *all* its members. Press comment or criticism of their books is also wanted, and Catholic editors have been most helpful here. Fifty subscriptions to newspapers and magazines have been donated to the Gallery this year, in return for publicity on the Gallery which is now sent out regularly. This publicity has also brought from the publishers the promise of all new books by Gallery authors, which are reviewed in its News Releases, and the library is thus being built up.

As one writer said in a letter among those received from the first one hundred invited to membership in the Gallery: "It is not an undertaking merely of today but of indefinite tomorrows." These letters were varying expressions of gratitude, encouragement and enthusiasm. To quote a few:

Alice Curtayne wrote: "Posthumous glory, while being more desirable than oblivion, is not of much practical benefit to the obscure toiler. . . . May your efforts in the cause of good literature be blessed."

Daniel Sargent said: "You do not make any mistake in making this collection, for although now all represented in it may not be very great, they all have a great opportunity which you help to make even greater."

Rev. James Gillis, C.S.P., wrote: "Our writers seem to be virtually unknown to the people. If your work will help change that condition, as indeed it must, the Catholic people will be under a great debt to you."

Cardinals, Bishops and priests have bestowed their blessings on the Gallery. Among letters of commendation from the Hierarchy was one received recently from Archbishop Schrembs, who wrote:

I am indeed deeply concerned with the Gallery of Living Catholic Authors. More than ever we need today to call the attention of our people to this magnificent array of writers who have devoted themselves so efficiently to the work of instilling Catholic truth into the hearts of our people. There is unfortunately much rubbish and literary poison that enters into Catholic as well as into non-Catholic homes, and it is time that the Catholic clergy especially make every effort to acquaint our people with the rich treasury of Catholic thought as presented by the Gallery of Living Catholic Authors. I am happy indeed to send you my letter of approval of the splendid work of your organization.

Truly, the Gallery is building a monument more lasting than bronze.

Next week will begin a discussion on that perennial problem of our times, the Catholic novel. What have been its defects? What its handicaps? Joseph Belvedere and Charles A. Brady will treat these points, and the Literary Editor will try to delve into the approach of Catholic readers.—EDITOR.

BOOKS

CATHOLICS MUST PLAN OR PAY THE PIPER

SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES, 1941. A Record of the Fourteenth National Conference on Social Security. American Association for Social Security. \$2

IT is encouraging in these disheartening days of all-out effort for war mobilization that some people should be looking beyond the war boom to the inevitable crash that will follow. The millions in the camps demobilized, the war industries in collapse, the nation staggering under an immense debt, the non-defense industries unable to take up the slack of unemployment—what then?

Some of the scholars who took part in the Fourteenth National Conference on Social Security estimate the post-war unemployment between twenty and thirty millions! All of them realize the need of long range planning to avert only God-knows-what after we shall have imposed the four freedoms on the world. Their discussions on the inadequacies of unemployment insurance, on the need of bringing medical care within the reach of lower income groups without humiliation and without stigma, on the role of government in this work-to-be, are at one and the same time, stimulating, thought-provoking, disheartening.

Something in us should rebel at the general assumption that there must always be great unemployment problems, constantly recurring crises of greater or less immensity, millions of human beings in the United States who can never hope to be complete human beings capable of procuring for themselves, through decent labor, the ordinary decencies of life—food, home, clothing, medical care, security for old age.

As long as our economic system makes such complete humanity impossible, then the Government has an obligation to face the task. Unfortunately it is all too fashionable to assume that even State government cannot meet the situation and step by step complete control of all life is passing into Federal hands. If in reality only the Federal Government can accomplish such a necessary task, then, of course, the Federal Government will try to do the work, and the United States becomes conditioned, as other nations have been conditioned, for the totalitarian state. But the question still remains: Is there no economic or social planning that will secure for all our people a fair sharing of the Good Life without making them wards of the state? Catholic planners, wake up!

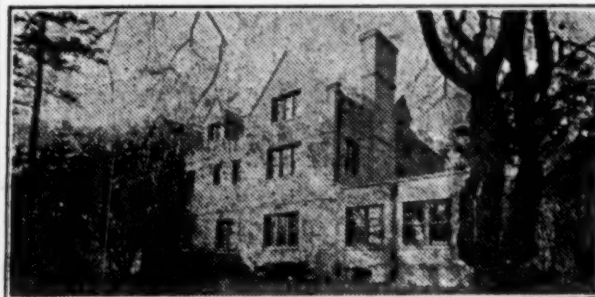
JOHN P. DELANEY

BREATHLESS EXCITEMENT IN A QUIET WESTERNER

NO LIFE FOR A LADY. By Agnes Morley Cleaveland. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3

THIS prize book of the *Life in America* series is somewhat unusual among prize books: it is actually prize-worthy. It is both a literary achievement and a contribution to Americana that is genuine on both counts. Mrs. Cleaveland opens her reminiscences with her father and the epic Santa Fé period, glides gracefully through tales of adventure, intrigue, romance, love and hate, and all things human, while she brings New Mexico and the Southwest intimately and picturesquely before our eyes.

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tically directed. It is a vivid narrative of Western vignettes effectively selected. The impression recurs of a statue carved to meticulous order and chastely chiselled. The story is as simple as human nature will permit it to be. It starts with the untimely death of William Raymond Morley, who fell the victim of the only thing he feared in life—the unloaded gun. The Santa Fé lost one of its most efficient and daring engineers. From then on the story is told of cowboy and ranch life in New Mexico by one who knows every step and every heart pulse of this frontier American life. We ride, and furiously, we sing and dance, we brave danger in no Hollywood manner, we hunt, we reap, and enter through the author's graciousness to the very hearthstones of a great people.

If a story can be quietly told and still be breathless with excitement, the reader will find that story here. The author feels no need to embellish or exaggerate or romanticize: she merely relates realities in language that is modest and measured, full-toned and yet restrained. In her delineation of her big brother, Raymond, the author would have us indeed know and love a truly heroic character, and one worth imitation in many ways; in drawing that admirable portrait, unconsciously Mrs. Cleaveland has given us a very human picture of herself. So human, in fact, that most readers will want to meet the lovely lady who could in her advancing years write such an attractive book and then entitle it *No Life For a Lady*.

F. X. DOWNEY

KINGS WHO WOULD NOT SPOIL THE CHILD

ROD OF IRON. By Milton Waldman. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.50

THE title gives slight indication of the nature or contents of the book. It might be a story, a romance, an historical novel, even a history. The last it actually is, as the subtitle indicates: *The Absolute Rulers of England*. The title was created for these present times of 1941 and so, it seems, was the book. The moral trouncing of dictators is this year in the democratic atmosphere. But this is none the less a good book and would make profitable reading for all, and interesting reading for most, especially for those interested in the Reformation period in England, or in England's struggle to eliminate the "divine right monarch" or the "king dictator." It has the merit of a unified theme; it is an historical study of the reigns of those rulers of England who would carry their own will against the popular will of the nation.

Mr. Waldman is master of England's internal history from 1509, the beginning of Henry VIII's reign, to 1660, the year of the "restoration" after the death of "dictator" Cromwell, the Lord Protector. It was the latter, according to this study, who paradoxically as dictator did protect the ancient traditions of medieval England, of a monarchy limited and restrained by custom, law and the rights of the people. Thus no monarch in England, thereafter, from King Charles II and down the centuries could by an astute blending of force and cajolery succeed in doing what Henry VIII, and Elizabeth, and James and Charles, first of the name, tried and in part succeeded in doing, excepting Charles who failed.

The author has mastered the best of Gardiner, Gairdner, Green, Lingard, Trevelyan, Pollard and Strickland, England historians all. He has the merit of the honest Britisher who places blame where blame is due, though the object be an English king; he enjoys the further merit of not obtruding with partiality the religious question of a period whose history has been ruined by this prejudice. As with many such works written in the lighter essay form, his generalizations are sometimes too general and his picturesque phrasings sometimes too picturesque for exact truth.

PETER M. DUNNE

LOOK AT ALL THOSE ROSES. By Elizabeth Bowen.

Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50

PERHAPS the title of the eleventh of the nineteen pieces which make up this collection of "short stories" (debatable classification) by the author of *The House in Paris* and *The Death of the Heart*, describes, better than any of the eighteen other titles might have, the contents of the book. These roses, blooms and buds, will serve as a bouquet to brighten a few hours. Their aroma is one of a rather musty sweetness; they smell of decay. Miss Bowen is at her best in evoking a subtly macabre mood, as in *The Cat Jumps*, *The Needlecase*, and the title story; *The Apple Tree* is unforgivably spoiled by a weak and arbitrary "quick solution."

There is something hopelessly pagan underlying all these stories of more or less pathological people. Fulsome praise of her previous work may have deceived Miss Bowen into believing herself unusually gifted with psychological penetration. Her characters betray her. The only ones who come really alive are the few normal people, among them Hilda Cadman in *Reduced* and the two high school girls in *A Walk in the Woods*; most of the others are as flat as photographs. But she has a way with words in describing seasons, scenes, hours, in spite of a tendency to be too "stylistic" (*vueux rose* and *eau de nil* for old rose and Nile-green). Ladies will find the collection lovely.

R. F. GRADY

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY. By Tihamer Toth. B. Herder Book Co. \$2

ONE of Europe's outstanding pulpit orators, Bishop Toth's sermons are also readable, as is proved by this seventh volume of his discourses. His present treatise begins with the meaning of marriage before the coming of Christ, then follows the theme down to our time, ending with the climax of Catholic Marriage. Bishop Toth treats ably, frankly and delicately, Divorce, the Sin of Birth Control, Attempts To Justify Birth Control. All of the sermons will be helpful to priests in the pulpit and in the confessional as well as to the laymen for whom they were first delivered. A word of appreciation is due the translator, V. G. Agotai, and the editor, Father Newton Thompson. DANIEL M. O'CONNELL

MARRIAGE IS A PRIVATE AFFAIR. By Judith Kelly. Harper and Bros. \$2.50

THE Harper Prize Novel for this year is the story of the first four years of the marriage of Theo Schofield and Tom West. It portrays the mental struggles of Theo, their origins, progress and solution. There are inner strivings and instincts in Theo and Tom to reach something better; but what the authoress has them reach after the struggles of four years is only a something better which is the aftermath of adultery and a happiness in their union which is promised after the abortion of their third child.

All this immorality is amoral in the novel; it is never indelicately portrayed. The authoress has pictured for us the situation of one of our religionless social classes, and the only reason why a solution, made without thought of religion or morality, is made seem ultimate is that the novel ends while Theo and Tom are still young. Miss Kelly writes delightful English, though her (or Harpers') style of punctuation is irritating at times. One of the finest passages on the feelings of a mother with child runs through ten pages of the book.

J. CRAGMYR

THE LIFE OF SIR THOMAS MORE, KNIGHT. By Cresacre More, Esq. Edited and modernized by James L. Kennedy, LL.M. The Riverside Press of Athens, Pa. \$2.50

THIS book is a character delineation rather than mere biography. Although the author, More's great-grandson, humbly remarks in the preface: "... I will not ascribe to myself so great a privilege of loving him best . . .," the work is evidently a labor of love. It is at the same time a scholarly and literary composition by one whose knowledge of the facts is eminently reliable. The diffuse

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and somewhat effusive style as well as the archaic lan-
guage make a charming frame for this authentic and
splendid portrait of the Chancellor-Saint. The author, as
might be expected, gives a prominent place to More's
family life, to his piety, care and holy ambitions for his
children. His associations with the greatest scholars of
his age are mentioned at length, and the author gives a
shrewd and valuable criticism of the enigmatic friend-
ship between the saintly More and the cynic Erasmus.
Lengthy quotations from More's works, especially from
his speeches, enhance the value of the book, and the
reader is delighted with numerous anecdotes. Best of all,
the author writes as one convinced that, although More's
natural genius and accomplishments merit the admira-
tion of posterity, his greatest characteristic in his sanc-
tity.

The editor has done a great service in giving us this
classic. Unfortunately, the format of the book is a bit
confusing and there are lapses in spelling, notably in
Latin quotations. It is to be hoped that these defects
will be corrected and the work republished.

JOHN J. NASH

You Go Your Way. By Katharine Brush. Farrar and
Rinehart. \$2

BREEZILY modern is this tale in the wise-cracking
manner which is sometimes accepted as "brilliant" writ-
ing, of the man-and-wife problem of staying man and
wife. The only *problematic* element seems to be the pre-
conceived notion of the woman that she would never be
happily married until she had been divorced from and
remarried to her first man. She sees it through like that,
and finds she was right. Moral principles have nothing
to do with the so-called solution. The book carries no
salutary lesson; it solves nothing that could not have
been pre-solved by a few sound whacks when the woman
was a child.

ROBERT E. HOLLAND

SEA POWER IN THE MACHINE AGE. By Bernard Brodie.
Princeton University Press. \$3.75

THE evolution of sea power in the machine age has had
a decided effect upon the political policies of the nations
which are fighting it out on the high seas today, and
Bernard Brodie's new book divides the body of tech-
nological change which war vessels have experienced
during the past hundred years into five major cate-
gories. The nineteenth century saw the introduction of
the first steam propelled warships and consequently a
complete revision of the conditions governing naval tac-
tics and strategy. The next important innovation in con-
struction was the shift from timber to iron-hulled war-
ships. A bitter battle was fought in Parliament before
the "innate conservatism" of the legislature finally suc-
cumbed to the exigency of building a "tin-pot navy" to
replace the glorious ships with "hearts of oak," as the
song dear to Cockney hearts has it.

The development of armor and powerful ordnance to
penetrate it prompted the next nautical revolution
which, in less than a century, so transformed the ship-
of-the-line that beside it the towering masts which for-
merly ruled the sea were relegated to the realm of
legend.

The coming of the torpedo, the mine and the subma-
rine represented an extension of naval warfare to a new
dimension, as did the employment of aircraft. Mr. Brodie
in his timely study of the relative value of the air arm
to Great Britain and Germany observes that the short
range inherent in its nature "ultimately prevents it from
superseding the surface fleet": when it is utilized, in
this case by the British in reconnaissance work, it en-
hances the efficacy of closing the sea lanes to German
ports. The findings clearly indicate that, contrary to
the layman's belief, Britain's surface craft are more
than a match for the formidable bombing formations
of the German *Luftwaffe*.

Although scientific detail renders part of the book
somewhat esoteric, it is a fascinating and valuable work
which should be read before attempting to comprehend
contemporary history.

P. ELLIOTSMITH

MUSIC

AMERICAN music, even music throughout the world, has been different because of one composer and his never-to-be-forgotten "blues," the *Memphis Blues*, *Beale Street Blues*, *Jogo Blues*, and best known of all, *St. Louis Blues*. Their creator, William Christopher Handy, author of *Father of the Blues*, (Macmillan. \$3) is one of the most famous living Negroes.

Mr. Handy writes of his life with a simple dignity, a pervading charm and sense of humor that will make this book good reading for young and old.

As a child, he loved nature and music, but not until he had earned a reputation did his father, a minister of stern Calvinistic faith, forgive him for following the "devilish" calling of worldly music and the theatre.

Born in Florence, Alabama, in 1873, he tells of his early struggles and the lot of a Negro musician knocking about with entertainment groups in the deep South. Handy knew a side of American life that has now vanished, the colored minstrel show. For years he traveled with Mahara's Minstrel Men, but one day books on music began to claim his attention. He owned Steiner's *First Lessons in Harmony* and Moore's *Encyclopedia of Music*. He came to think that everything worthwhile was to be found in music books but he finally discovered that the "blues" did not come from books. They were born rather from suffering, hard luck and aching hearts.

William Handy and his band were well known on Beale Street in Memphis. A Mr. Crump was running for a political office and Handy was engaged to write a campaign song entitled, *Mr. Crump*. This title was changed to *Memphis Blues* and copyrighted in 1912. With it, even though Handy did not realize it, an American composer was born. He received a "bungled bargain" by selling this song outright for one hundred dollars. In 1933, after twenty-eight years of seeing other people make big profits out of Memphis Blues, Handy regained the copyright of his song. He recounts the story as a warning to young composers.

In 1914, Handy wrote *St. Louis Blues*, remembering a visit to St. Louis where the absence of money made the pavements his sleeping quarters. He says that life for him began at forty when he wrote *St. Louis Blues*, for ever since, in one sense or another, his life has revolved around that composition. Money began to flow in from Columbia and Victor recordings. He founded the Pace and Handy Publishing Company and brought it to New York, where under the strain of bankruptcy and temporary blindness he gradually realized the importance of the new type of music he had created.

This book not only reveals a great individual career but the whole trend of American music, from the days of the old popular songs of the South, through ragtime to jazz and on to present-day swing.

Norse folklore embellishes the early chapters of *Song of the North—The Story of Edvard Grieg*, by Claire Lee Purdy, (Julian Messner. \$2.50) a biographical story for young people, dealing with Grieg's boyhood.

In his early youth young Edvard showed a remarkable talent and when Ole Bull, the famous violinist, visited his parents, the cornerstone of a musical career was laid. After studying in his native country and Leipzig, the composer started to assert himself and among his successful efforts in the Nordic idiom, were his brilliant piano concerto and the famous song, *I Love Thee*.

His wife Nina, a singer of reputation, was the first to introduce Grieg's songs, and extensive concert tours on the continent gave him the sincere esteem of Liszt, Brahms, Wagner and many other luminaries.

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THEATRE

GOOD news continues to come from the producers. They have all sorts of good things for us in rehearsal, or in "tryouts" on the road. Many of these, of course, may never reach us, but it is exhilarating to read the promising reports about them.

One of the first of the new offerings will be *Village Green*, a comedy by Carl Allensworth, scheduled to open at Henry Miller's Theatre on Labor Day, which falls this year on September first. There are a lot of clever young people back of this play, and three of them—Donald and Julian Olney and Felix Jacoves—are producing it. The comedy is already in rehearsal by a fine company, headed by Frank Craven as star and including John Craven, his son, Miss Perry Wilson, Frank Wilcox and Calvin Thomas. Frank Craven should have and undoubtedly will receive a warm welcome back to New York. He has been away from us too long—ever since his appearance in the Broadway production of *Our Town*, in 1938.

This month there are a number of inevitable departures and revivals. *The Beautiful People* has finally left us, without tears from this chronicler, who was never able to see anything of real beauty in it. Gertrude Lawrence will reopen *Lady in The Dark* at the Alvin Theatre on Labor Day, after a complete rest on Cape Cod.

It has been hard to find a substitute for Jack Durant, who is leaving *Pal Joey* because he has to fill a contract in Hollywood; but David Burns has now been given the role. *Johnny Belinda* is leaving us for an extended road tour, with Louise and Jean Platt alternating in the star role. Helen Craig will take a longer rest, but is busily considering new plays.

As for other new attractions, the middle of September is supposed to bring us *Keep Covered*, a farce to be produced by Morris Sarnoff. *Western Union, Please*, is now having a tryout in New Jersey before its early opening here. It is written by Francis Goodrich and its leading players are Charles Butterworth and June Walker. Fine reports of it are reaching town.

Another early dramatic newcomer in New York will be *We Fought at Arques*, in which Frederick Hazlitt Brennan will reveal some of the war experiences of an English Cockney family. The play is now vigorously rehearsing here, and is tentatively scheduled for an opening at the Plymouth Theatre on September eighth. Heather Angel and Edmund Green head the excellent cast.

Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman are still modestly silent as to the title of the new play they wrote together last spring and which is expected to open here early in October. Broadway gossip is that they cannot agree on the title. Max Gordon has taken over the unnamed play from the Sam H. Harris estate, and will give it an out-of-town tryout in a few weeks.

Incidentally some of the out-of-town tryouts are having a hard time. The latest sufferer among the producers is Brock Pemberton, whose recent tryout of *Two Story House*, by Parker Fennelly, proved that it needed considerable rewriting. It is now getting that, and Mr. Pemberton optimistically predicts an early New York appearance.

But the best advance news of all, to many theatre enthusiasts is the assured coming of Noel Coward's big London success, *Blythe Spirit*. Every English review I have seen of that play was favorable, and even in these war times the comedy is said to be filling the London theatre in which it is appearing. This is especially interesting in view of the fact that most of the characters in the comedy are dead. But evidently cheerful ghosts are now welcome visitors in England.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE. Robert Louis Stevenson's novel, like its chief character, suffers from a dual personality, and if it has not always been mature screen entertainment, that fact is due to the treatment of the work as a story of horror rather than as an allegory. On the former plane, it is an outrageously lurid yarn whose pseudo-scientific touches are dated even as nonsense. This technically excellent production is not altogether free from such literalness, but its advantages of direction and casting restore something of its symbolic meaning. This Jekyll is a carefully if obviously motivated humanitarian, not a Faustian meddler, and his evocation of Hyde is first the result of experiment, then of despondency when he is separated from his fiancée by parental obstinacy. The make-up for Hyde is sufficiently startling without being absurd, and Spencer Tracy makes his sadistic persecution of a Cockney barmaid an appalling revelation of evil. Victor Fleming has composed his incidents with almost painful sharpness, so that the moments of alternate brutality and pathos are intensely stirring. Ingrid Bergman's study of the barmaid is a masterpiece of terror, and Lana Turner is exceptional in a restrained role. Aside from its confusion of the Christian doctrine of the weakness of the will with a duality of good and evil in man's nature, and corollary foolishness, the film is a striking sermon, but even as fantastic melodrama, it is superior adult entertainment. (MGM)

CHARLEY'S AUNT. It is an historical irony that Brandon Thomas' farce, produced at the dawn of the dramatic renaissance in England, has survived most of the deadly significant plays of the period. Proof that the most elementary humor is universal comes from the fact that this museum-piece is still amusing, despite some modernization, and while it requires a certain receptivity to become hilarious, it neither looks nor acts its extreme age. When two Oxford students need a chaperon for their entertaining, they induce an aging scholar to impersonate an expected aunt, and the subterfuge leads to a scrambling and unscrambling of identities and romances. Jack Benny is frequently funny as the female impersonator even though he clings to distracting mannerisms alien to the role. Archie Mayo's direction is smooth and lively, and Kay Francis, Reginald Owen, Laird Cregar, Arleen Whelan and James Ellison are good support. This is adult diversion. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

DRESSED TO KILL. The wedding plans of Michael Shayne, slightly unorthodox private detective, are interrupted by the business of murder in this prodigal melodrama. A faded producer of the Belasco vintage is found slain with a former star in circumstances suggesting a stage setting. The wedding waits on crime, of course, and before the killer is exposed, acts of violence pile up with startling suddenness. The gruesome details are managed with some novelty and Eugene Forde's treatment of the plot eases suspense with comedy. Lloyd Nolan dominates this entertaining adult film. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

CITADEL OF CRIME. Behind this imposing title is a minor melodrama about the invasion of the West Virginia mountains by modern gangsters eager to apply business principles to moonshine production. There is unintentional comedy in the intrusion of Harold Bell Wright characters into a *Little Caesar* scenario, but the best efforts of Frank Albertson, Robert Armstrong and Skeets Gallagher cannot make more than an amusing oddity out of this adult mixture of sentimentality and violence. (Republic)

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EVENTS

NOW and then, a person will do something and the most unexpected, the most extraordinary results will follow. . . . Incidents which broke into the news last week gave further confirmation to this already well-substantiated fact. . . . One confirmation came from New York. An insurance salesman there, looking for business, nonchalantly pressed the door-bell of a two-story house. Immediately, there was a terrific explosion inside which tore out the whole back part of the house. . . . Connecticut also furnished corroboration. In that State, a young man, undressing for bed in the dark, threw his trousers in the direction of a nearby chair. Instead of the sound of pants falling on a chair, the sharp crack of a rifle burst on the air, right near the young man's ear. . . . California lined up with additional supporting evidence. In Santa Monica, late Saturday night, with the banks closed, a department store manager brought \$5,700 to a police station for safekeeping over the week-end. On Monday morning, he returned to get the money. The safe in the police station had been robbed. The money was gone. . . . Illinois lined up with her sister States. In a big building there, a man stepped on an apple core. Instead of taking a header, he remained erect. Surprised at this unexpected result, he was still more surprised that alarm signals should be clanging, set off by his contact with the apple. Police and firemen rushed to the building to discover they had been called in error because a man stepped on an apple. . . . There was another alarm incident. Seeking to aid a trolley-car conductor, who was being robbed by a gunman, an observer turned in a fire-alarm. The trolley moved off, the observer was arrested for turning in a false alarm.

There is, of course, always an explanation for these untoward happenings. . . . The New York house, of which the door-bell was pushed, was full of gas. The residents had committed suicide. A spark from the bell set off the explosion. . . . The young man's pants hit a rifle on the wall. . . . The man on the apple core, feeling himself slipping, put his hand out for support, touched police and fire alarms. . . . The department store manager's experience indicates that a police station is not the appropriate place in which to put things for safe-keeping.

History is full of incidents more or less similar to the above. . . . Columbus was looking for one thing and got another. He, so to speak, threw his pants toward Asia, and not Asia but a vast New World rose up around him. . . . Karl Marx pressed the world's door-bell, and the resultant explosions are still resounding over all the continents. Unlike the insurance man, Karl wanted to start trouble, but he never dreamed his obscure efforts would ignite so much poisonous gas, gas that had been stored up in the world. He did not foresee that the detonations he set in process would tear whole nations apart, and bring misery and death to untold millions. . . . Luther thought he would put religion in the vaults of private judgment for safekeeping. He argued it was not safe with Rome. The department store manager lost his money, and the followers of Luther have, for the most part, lost their religion. Private judgment, like the police station, is not a safe place in which to store valuables. . . . Around the turn of the century and after, observers tried to help youths who were being robbed of their Faith by Darwin. The observers turned in alarm after alarm, without avail. Only lately has it been recognized that there was a real robbery going on and that it will take more than the human resources of this world to regain the treasures that were stolen.

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